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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

APRIL, 1925

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Stories of the Mysteries

BESIDES the great Books of the Mysteries, we may recognize, in the spiritual records of all peoples and all times, a supplementary class of Stories of the Mysteries.

The Dramas of the Mysteries are primarily records of Initiation. Their purpose is, to record, so far as that may be possible, the tremendous spiritual realities that are revealed in Initiation through the transcendental powers of perception which are unfolded by the process of Initiation; to record these realities both for the general instruction of mankind, and for the particular guidance of students of spiritual life, who are consciously working and fighting their way toward Initiation.

A part of the Scriptures of all races and peoples consists of these records of spiritual reality based on knowledge gained through Initiation. The sacred cosmogonies; the descriptions of the remote past and future of the world; the teaching of the spiritual powers, latent in the uninitiated multitude, active in the Initiate; all these must, in so far as they correspond with reality, be records of the wisdom gained through Initiation. They may have been defaced or obscured by transmission; they may have been added to or curtailed; but the central nucleus, if it be real, can have no other source.

This part of the Scriptures we may think of as a record of spiritual science for the general teaching of mankind. The true Scriptures contain, in addition, teaching, the direct purpose of which is the particular guidance of disciples who are treading the path leading to Initiation. And the Scriptures might, in a sense, be graded by the validity and practical availability of these directions, and the distance they will carry the disciple toward his goal, aiding him to prepare for Initiation.

This direct practical purpose of the Sacred Books is described with eloquent simplicity in one of the discourses attributed to the Buddha, which is

named *The Fruit of Discipleship*. As is so often the case in the Buddhist books, it is introduced by a story. King Ajatashatru, namesake of a far earlier king in the period of the older *Upanishads*, desires to find the true way; he visits the famous teachers of religious doctrines, putting to each in turn this question:

"All practical arts and sciences show visible and immediate fruit. Thus the potter makes vessels which are useful to mankind, and the sale of which brings him money. So with the carpenter, the builder and others. Now, I wish to know whether there is in the life of the disciple any visible, tangible and immediate fruit like the fruit obtained by the potter, the carpenter, the builder."

Each of the famous teachers avoids giving a direct answer; one discusses the origin of matter; another, the indifference of all things; another, the complete extinction of consciousness. Ajatashatru protests, with humorous perplexity, that it is as though he had asked about a mango, and had been told about a breadfruit. Finally he comes to the Buddha, who thus replies:

"In this world, O king, a Tathagata is born, who sees and knows the universe face to face, the worlds above and the worlds below; and, having known it, makes his knowledge known to others. The truth, lovely in its origin, lovely in its progress, lovely in its consummation, he proclaims, in the spirit and in the letter; the higher life he makes known in its fulness, in its purity. Thence comes the awakening of him who hears, his renunciation of the world, his self-discipline in act, word and thought, his conquest of avarice, anger, sloth, perplexity, his attainment of joy and peace as he rises through the higher realms of consciousness to truth and mastery." A later passage speaks of the disciple "calling forth from this body another body, having form, made of mind, having all limbs and parts, not deprived of any organ"; the body of the disciple on the way to adeptship. "It is as if one were to draw a reed from its sheath, a sword from its scabbard."

Here, then, is the origin and purpose of what is most real in the Sacred Books: coming from Initiation, they lead to Initiation. The Stories of the Mysteries are guide posts along the sacred way; they reveal and record some aspect of the Mystery Teaching, telling something of the realities which are seen by those who know the universe face to face.

Stories of the Mysteries form a considerable part of the sacred records of Buddhism; they are held to be the words of the Tathagata himself, drawn forth by the questions or acts of his disciples; very often they are cast in the form of an account of the past births of those whom the Buddha is addressing, to throw light on the circumstances of the present birth.

One of them, not, however, the story of a former birth, is known as the Sutta of Kevaddha. It has that rich quality of humour so constantly present in the teachings of the Buddha; a humour which is more characteristic, perhaps, of that great Master, than of any other among the highest Teachers of mankind:

"Once, when the Master was at Nalanda, in the mango garden, a certain Kevaddha, a landlord's son, came to him and said:

"'Master, this our city Nalanda is great, rich, prosperous and devoted to the Master. Would it not be an excellent thing for the Master to bid one of his disciples who possesses occult powers to perform some phenomenal wonder here? Thus would our Nalanda become even more devoted to the Master.'

"But the Master answered: 'Kevaddha, I do not teach my disciples to perform phenomenal wonders for the multitude.'

"Kevaddha said: 'I do not wish to offend the Master, but what I said was that Nalanda is great, rich and prosperous, and that it would be an excellent thing for the Master to bid one of his disciples who possesses occult powers to perform some phenomenal wonder here, for thus would our Nalanda become even more devoted to the Master.'

"Again the Master answered: 'Kevaddha, I do not teach my disciples to perform phenomenal wonders for the multitude.'

"For the third time Kevaddha said: 'I do not wish to offend the Master, but what I said was that Nalanda is great, rich and prosperous, and that it would be an excellent thing for the Master to bid one of his disciples who possesses occult powers to perform some phenomenal wonder here, for thus would our Nalanda become even more devoted to the Master.'

"The Master answered: 'Kevaddha, I teach three wonders: occult powers, occult insight, and occult training. What are these occult powers? They are the powers by which a disciple takes many forms, becomes invisible, rises in the air, walks on the water. If a believer who had seen this should tell it to a skeptic, might not the skeptic say, "Oh yes, that is the Gandhara trick!"'

"'He might say so, Master.'

"'That is why I am opposed to exhibitions of occult powers. And if a disciple should read the thoughts of another, and a believer who had seen it should tell it to a skeptic, might not the skeptic say, "Oh yes, that is the Jewel trick!"'

"'He might say so, Master.'

"'That is why I am so opposed to the exhibition of occult powers. But the third wonder, occult training, teaches a disciple that he should think in this way and not in that way, that he should keep this in mind and not that, that he should shun this and not that. When a Tathagata appears, this is what a disciple should learn. A certain disciple desired to know how the four elements, earth, water, fire and air, dissolve and leave no residue. He meditated so deeply that the inner worlds were revealed to him.

"'He came to the angels of the Four Regents and asked them how the four elements dissolve and leave no residue. But the angels of the Four Regents answered: "Disciple, we do not know how the four elements dissolve. But the Four Regents are more advanced and more perfect than we; they will tell you about the four elements." So the disciple went to the Four Regents and asked them. But they answered, "Disciple, we do not know

how the four elements are dissolved. The angels of the Thirty-three are more advanced and more perfect than we; they will tell you about the four elements." So the disciple went to the angels of the Thirty-three, who sent him to the Thirty-three, who sent him to Indra, who sent him to Yama, who sent him to Suyama; and so it went till he came at last to the world of Brahma.

"'He asked the angels of the world of Brahma concerning the four elements, but they answered: "Disciple, we do not know; but Brahma, mighty Brahma, the surpassing, the unsurpassed, the all-seeing, the omnipotent, the Lord, the maker, the creator, the most excellent ruler, the Father of what has been and what shall be, is more advanced and more perfect than we. Brahma will tell you about the four elements."

"'"Where is mighty Brahma?"

"'"Disciple, we do not know where Brahma is, or whereby Brahma is, or why Brahma is. But where the shining and the radiance appear, there Brahma will appear, for these are the signs of his presence."

"'In no long time there came the shining and the radiance, and mighty Brahma appeared. Thereupon the disciple, approaching, asked him:

"'"How, Sir, do the four elements, earth, water, fire, air, dissolve without a residue?"

"'When the disciple had thus spoken, Brahma said:

"'"I, O disciple, am Brahma, mighty Brahma, surpassing, unsurpassed, all-seeing, omnipotent, Lord, maker, creator, most excellent ruler, Father of what has been and what shall be."

"'A second time the disciple addressed Brahma, saying: "Sire, I did not ask thee whether thou art Brahma, mighty Brahma, surpassing, unsurpassed, all-seeing, omnipotent, Lord, maker, creator, most excellent ruler, Father of what has been and what shall be. I asked thee where the four elements, earth, water, fire, air, are dissolved without a residue."

"'A second time mighty Brahma said to the disciple: "I, O disciple, am Brahma, mighty Brahma, surpassing, unsurpassed, all-seeing, omnipotent, Lord, maker, creator, most excellent ruler, Father of what has been and what shall be."

"'The disciple put the same question a third time. Then mighty Brahma took the disciple by the arm and led him to one side and said to him: "Disciple, the angels of the world of Brahma think that there is nothing that Brahma does not know, nothing that Brahma does not see, nothing that Brahma does not understand. Therefore I did not answer in their hearing. But the truth is, disciple, that I do not know where the four elements, earth, water, fire, air, are dissolved without a residue. But go, disciple, to the Buddha, and ask him. As the Buddha answers, so it will be."

"'So, swift as a homing bird, the disciple came to the Buddha and put his question.

"'The Buddha answered him that there is surcease of the four elements in the spiritual consciousness of him who attains Nirvana.'"

So far this Story of the Mysteries. It has a good many lessons. It shows, for example, that the desire to witness occult wonders was much the same twenty-five centuries ago as in our own days, and that much the same arguments were used to persuade the Masters to produce or permit them. There is a striking likeness of tone between the argument of the Buddha and that of a living Master, who is reported to have written: "It adds no force to our metaphysical truths that our letters are dropped from space on to your lap or come under your pillow. Put that conviction into your consciousness and let us talk like sensible men. Why should we play with Jack-in-the-box?" And this Master goes on to insist on occult discipline, just as the Buddha did. It is further worth noting that, confronted with the report of occult wonders, our modern skeptics replied, as of yore: "Oh yes, that is the Gandhara trick." The Gandhara trick seems to have been a bit of juggling, which created the illusion of invisibility; the Jewel trick had to do with apparent thought-reading; both may have been familiar feats of hypnotism.

It may well be that the Buddha told the story of the disciple to give a graphic picture of the ascending planes of consciousness, and to stress the truth that not all their denizens are possessed of ultimate knowledge, or can solve ultimate problems; yet another lesson which is relevant to many latter day revelations.

Finally, it would seem to be the Teacher's purpose to show that there is only one path along which we can proceed to the solution of cosmic problems, even those which appear to be questions of pure physical science. This is the path through the ascending planes of consciousness, the path of Initiation. Only when the highest consciousness is experienced, when the partition wall is broken down and the twain become one; only when Matter and Spirit are revealed as not opposed in essence, but as the two poles of the one Substance, the Life, can the problems even of pure physics find their final solution. Therefore Brahma, mighty Brahma, the personification of the pole of Spirit, sends the aspiring disciple to the Buddha, in fact to seek Initiation through the guidance of that great Master.

There are in Plato many echoes of the Mysteries and of the records of Initiation, the tradition of which was commonly current in Plato's day. The story of Atlantis admittedly comes through Solon from the hierophants of Egypt, and it would be well worth while to gather from Greek literature all the traditions in which Pythagoras, Solon and Thales and other founders of Greek philosophy and science are said to have gained their wisdom from the sacred schools of Egypt. It is probable that in Egypt, rather than in Greece, we should find the real source and foundation of Hellenic thought, which in its turn is the source of so much of what is best in modern thought, both philosophy and science.

In the *Republic* of Plato there are two famous passages which appear to fall within our category of Stories of the Mysteries. The first is the often quoted parable of the cave dwellers, at the beginning of the seventh book. Humanity in this earthly bondage is likened to men in a cavern-like dwelling, seated with their backs to the entrance, and so fettered and chained

that they cannot turn to the light. At some distance behind and above them is a great fire. Between the fire and the cavern men pass carrying all sorts of utensils and human statues and figures of animals, so that the shadows of these are cast on the wall in front of the fettered men, and the wall further sends them back echoes of the speech of those who are passing outside the door of the cave. Shadows and echoes are their world. Plato goes on to describe the great liberation:

"When any one should be loosed, and obliged on a sudden to rise up, turn round his neck, and walk and look up towards the light, and in doing all these things he should be pained, and be unable, from the splendours, to behold the things he formerly saw the shadows of, what do you imagine he would say, if one should tell him that formerly he had seen trifles, but now being somewhat nearer to reality, and having his face turned toward what was more real, he saw better; and so, pointing out to him each of the things passing along, should question him, and oblige him to tell what it was, do not you imagine he would both be in doubt, and would deem what he had formerly seen to be more genuine than what was now pointed out to him? And if he should oblige him to look to the light itself, would not he find pain in his eyes, and shun it; and turning to such things as he is able to behold, reckon that these are really more certain than those pointed out? But if one should drag him from thence violently, through a rough and steep ascent, and never stop till he drew him up to the light of the sun, would not he whilst he was thus drawn, both be in torment, and be filled with indignation, and after he had even come to the light, having his eyes filled with splendour, he would be able to see none of those things now called genuine. But he would need to be accustomed to it some time, if he were to perceive things above. And, first of all, he would most easily perceive shadows, afterwards the images of men and of other things in water, and after that the things themselves. And with reference to these things, he would more easily see the things in the heavens, and the heavens themselves, looking in the night-time to the light of the stars and the moon, than by day, looking on the sun and the light of the sun. And, last of all, he may be able thoroughly to perceive and contemplate the sun himself, not in water, nor images of him, appearing in any thing else, but as he is in himself, in his own proper region, such as he is. And after this he would now reason with himself concerning him, that it is he who gives the seasons and the years, and regulates all things in this visible region, and that, of all these things which they formerly saw, he is in a certain manner the cause."

Here, once more, we have the path of Initiation, the rough and steep ascent, following which the disciple attains each degree of spiritual consciousness in turn, until at last he enters the light of the Logos, which illumines all things, ordains the successions of cyclic time, and is in a certain manner the cause of all things visible. There need be no doubt about the meaning of the parable: Plato tells us that it represents "the soul's ascent into the region of Intelligence," that is, the Logos.

Even more impressive than the parable itself is its conclusion:

"If such an one should descend and sit down again in the same seat, should not he now have his eyes filled with darkness, coming on the sudden from the sun? And should he now again be obliged to give his opinion of those shadows, and to dispute about them with those who were dazzled, would he not afford them laughter, and would it not be said of him, that having gone above, he was returned with vitiated eyes, and that it was not proper even to attempt to go above, and that whoever should attempt to loose them and lead them up, if ever they were able to get him into their hands, should even be put to death?"

Even more celebrated is Plato's story of Er, son of Arminius, in the tenth book of the Republic, and ending that enigmatic treatise. Er, left for dead on the battlefield, is carried as a shade to the abode of the discarnate, where are visibly presented to him the mysterious workings of the law of rebirth through Karma, the utter destruction of those who are vile beyond redemption, and the liberation of the elect. Er returns to this world on the twelfth day, to reveal what he has seen. Here again, there need be no question as to Plato's meaning:

"If the company will be persuaded by me, accounting the soul immortal, and able to bear all evil and all good, we shall always hold the road that leads above. And justice with prudence we shall by all means pursue in order that we may be friends both to ourselves and to the Gods, both whilst we remain here, and when we receive its rewards, like victors assembled together; and, we shall both here, and in that thousand years' journey we have described, enjoy a happy life."

The thousand years' journey is the traditional period between two incarnations. The same period is given in the sixth book of Virgil's *Aeneid*, which closely follows the lines of the story of Er. It seems certain that the same meaning is conveyed by the thousand years, in the twentieth chapter of the *Revelation;* the serpent, the lower nature, is bound a thousand years, while the higher nature rests in paradise. It may be wise to include the *Revelation* among the Dramas of the Mysteries, a record of Initiation. There is, perhaps, a vision of Masters of the Lodge: the four and twenty elders, "clothed in white raiment."

This brings us back to the wonderful vision in the second book of *Esdras:*

"I, Esdras, saw upon the mount of Sion a great people, whom I could not number, and they all praised the Lord with songs. And in the midst of them there was a young man of a high stature, taller than all the rest, and upon every one of their heads he set crowns, and was more exalted; which I marvelled at greatly. So I asked the angel, and said, Sir what are these? He answered and said unto me, These be they that have put off the mortal clothing, and put on the immortal, and have confessed the name of God; now they are crowned, and receive palms."

Space does not permit us to speak of those authentic Stories of the Mysteries, the Parables of the Kingdom, beyond the suggestion that they fall into

that category. The parable of the Prodigal Son not only depicts the return of a penitent soul, it foreshadows the final return of the soul, the "pilgrim of eternity," when ascent of the steep and rugged way is ended and the cycle of wandering is completed.

There is another class of books to which the name, Stories of the Mysteries, might perhaps be given, though not in the same sense. These books are not records of Initiation, nor are they the work of Initiates. They are rather the testimony of eager, intuitive souls ardently striving toward the light and, through the intensity of their aspiration, catching glimpses of the way before them.

Such a book is the *Pilgrim's Progress*, in which John Bunyan's fervent soul and vivid, pictorial imagination has described the journey "from this world to that which is to come." It is based on real spiritual experience, but the experience of one who is at the beginning of the way, not of the victor who has completed the journey. Bunyan was writing from the depth of his own spiritual trials when he described the crossing of the river of death:

"Then they addressed themselves to the water; and entering, Christian began to sink . . . a great darkness and horror fell upon him, so that he could not see before him. . . ."

We might, perhaps, class with Bunyan's allegory some of George Macdonald's stories. *At the Back of the North Wind* has its passages of intuitive vision and poetic beauty:

"It seemed to Diamond likewise that they were motionless in this centre, and that all the confusion and fighting went on around them. Flash after flash illuminated the fierce chaos, revealing in varied yellow and blue and gray and dusky red the vaporous contention; peal after peal of thunder tore the infinite waste; but it seemed to Diamond that North Wind and he were motionless, all but the hair. It was not so. They were sweeping with the speed of the wind itself towards the sea."

And again, speaking of the cries of the drowning in the sinking ship, North Wind says:

"I will tell you how I am able to bear it, Diamond: I am always hearing, through every noise, through all the noise I am making myself even, the sound of a far-off song. I do not exactly know where it is, or what it means; and I don't hear much of it, only the odour of its music, as it were, flitting across the great billows of the ocean outside this air in which I make such a storm; but what I do hear, is quite enough to make me able to bear the cry from the drowning ship. . . . It wouldn't be the song it seems to be if it did not swallow up all their fear and pain too, and set them singing it themselves with the rest. I am sure it will. And do you know, ever since I knew I had hair, that is, ever since it began to go out and away, that song has been coming nearer and nearer. . . ."

That is a higher and more intuitive note than Bunyan ever reaches. It leads us directly to *Light on the Path:*

"Listen to the song of life. Store in your mind the melody you hear. Learn

from it the lesson of harmony. You can stand upright now, firm as a rock amid the turmoil. . . ."

And this leads us, by natural steps, to the most recent of the great Stories of the Mysteries, though it goes back to ancient Egypt, the *Idyll of the White Lotus*, with its final picture of Initiation:

"I went back to my room and sat down, holding the flower in my hand. It was the same over again as when I had, long ago, a mere child, sat in this same chamber, holding a lily and gazing into its centre. I had a friend, a guide; a union with that unseen Mother of grace. But now I knew the value of what I held; then I did not. Was it possible that it would be again taken from me so easily? Surely no.

"For I could understand its language now. Then it spoke to me of nothing save its own beauty; now it opened my eyes, and I saw; it unsealed my ears, and I heard.

"A circle was round me; such as had surrounded me when I had taught, unknowingly, in the temple. These were priests, white-robed, as those had been who knelt and worshipped me. But these did not kneel; they stood and gazed down upon me with profound eyes of pity and love. Some were old men, stately and strong; some were young and slender, with faces of fresh light. I looked round in awe, and trembled with hope and joy.

"I knew, without any words to tell me, what brotherhood this was. . . ."

We have quoted from many books, of widely separated times and lands and races, these Stories of the Mysteries, guide-posts along the way of immortality. Where is the need of other books, less worthy? Should not all true books record parts of this one mighty epic? What other concern have we, what other destiny, what other hope? This is the path, steep and rugged, yet leading to the sunlit summits, on which our feet should be firmly set, as we strive toward the goal.

FRAGMENTS

A GREAT Teacher once said to his disciples what was thus entered in the note-book of one of them: "There are only two things you can do with a principle,—one is to live by it, and the other to die for it. If you can change it, it is not a principle and never has been, no matter how honestly you have believed it to be so."

In answer to questions, further light was shed upon this bit of priceless wisdom, so much needed in the world to-day, when cant and superstition strut in curious garments, and hysteria uses catch-words to stuff its empty brains and justify its vanities and violence.

"Principles," he explained, "are absolute and relative, of course," which is only to say that in this world of reflection—which the mental world is—the images of Eternal things are all that we can possess. Absolute principles, we, as mortals, cannot know, save in highest vision when a man is rapt out of himself and becomes for the moment the Immortal. Absolute principles are aspects of the unchanging nature of God.

Relative principles might be figured as those convictions, or theories if that term be preferred, which unmistakably influence and colour the whole tenor of a man's thought and action. They may have little in common with what he proclaims—quite often they are the reverse; but always are they the things for which he will die before he will surrender them. "Unless a man have convictions which he will die rather than surrender, one cannot, strictly speaking, be justified in saying that he has any principles at all."

As in chemistry: if an element, so-called, can be resolved into composing parts, the analysis has determined beyond dispute that the supposed element was not an element.

We must preserve balance and proportion, those beautiful twins, first-born of detachment. We must not go through life refusing to see facts because they are ugly, or inconvenient, or disparaging to us or to the world about us,—in terms of the *dernier cri* in the present fashion of thinking, "unbrotherly" or "uncharitable,"—a use of words altogether unjustifiable, and evidence of that malign effort in our time to smother with sentimentality those two most glorious ideals which the high gods have striven to impress upon humanity, but which are travestied and made cheap by the cheap men who use them, unknowingly, in the service of the Black Lodge.

CAVÉ.

A STUDY IN DISCIPLESHIP

NAPOLEON'S MARSHALS

IN the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY for October, 1918, Marshal Foch's lectures on the *Principles of War* were reviewed as a practical treatise on the spiritual warfare which each aspirant for chêlaship must wage against the evil in his own nature. Though the goal of the inner life may be conceived as eternal peace, it is a peace which can only be won through battle, and its fullest realization may lie in the heart of war. The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. From the days of the Bhagavad Gita, the principles of discipleship have been presented as the principles of war; and by studying the principles of war, those of discipleship may be learned.

In his opening pages, Marshal Foch asks and answers the question as to how the art of war may be studied. Though there are those who hold that "war can only be learned by war," and though there must always be a "special advantage given to the mind by the habit of coming to decisions in the presence of a real adversary, and especially of resisting such emotion as naturally follows a blow," yet, "as a matter of fact, there is no studying on the battlefield. It is then simply a question of doing what is possible to make use of what one knows; and in order to make a little *possible* one must *know* much." Though the Austrians had fought in 1859, in 1866 they showed that they knew less of war than the Prussians, who had not fought since 1815. "The former had waged war without learning anything thereby; the latter had learned the art of war without fighting,"—for they had studied history. "*History must be the source of learning the art of war.*" Thus Marshal Foch answers his own question. In the words of General de Peucker, "the more an army lacks war experience, the more it needs to make use of the history of war for its instruction. Although the history of war is no substitute for actual experience, it can be a foundation for such experience. In peace times it becomes the true method of learning war and of determining the invariable principles of the art of war."

It is the purpose of this article to urge upon all members of The Theosophical Society, and especially upon all aspirants for chêlaship, the deeper study of history from this point of view,—that they may learn from it the invariable principles of discipleship, and thus, coming to know much of the predictable effects and demonstrated consequences of each trait of human nature with which they have to deal, make it possible for them to use at least a little of that knowledge upon their battlefields.

Throughout the Society to-day there is much of good intention offered to the service of the Masters, but despite the teaching and experience of fifty years there is still, among the majority of the members, very little of knowledge or real understanding. Like the Austrians, they have waged war without learn-

ing from it. In their individual lives, they have struggled with their own lower natures, but they have seldom adequately analyzed the causes of their victories and defeats, which have therefore left them, perhaps humbler, but little wiser than before. In their local Branch they have worked with their fellows for Theosophy, often consciously striving to act as a group of disciples in the Masters' cause, but too rarely attempting to think out clearly what should be the principles of strategy and tactics which should govern such a collective endeavour, or how the various elements which enter into it can be most effectively used and combined. Indeed sometimes it appears as though there were no clear recognition of what these elements are, and but little comprehension of the dependence of the outer work upon the issue of the members' inner efforts. It is this lack in understanding which the right study of history should supply.

The history of the world is the history of great men. Every historical movement has turned upon a small group of men,—usually upon one *great* man, the central nucleus of the group, who is, in some sense, the incarnation of the cause he serves. "It is not the Roman legions that conquered the Gauls, but Cæsar. Not the soldiers of Carthage caused Rome to tremble, but Hannibal. It was not the Macedonian troops that penetrated as far as India, but Alexander. During seven years Prussia was defended against the three most powerful nations in Europe, not by Prussian soldiers, but by Frederick the Great." These are the words of Napoleon, and, as Marshal Foch comments, "he could have written more, and with still better cause, if he had included that wonderful period of history which he has completely filled with his own personality."

Great men need great instruments. None but Ulysses could bend Ulysses' bow; nor could that bow be corded with a packthread. Greatness is rare. No age produces more than a very few great men,—men who are inherently great in their own right, whose greatness is rounded and symmetric, and not confined to one or two exceptionally developed faculties. But in the nature of such greatness is a spiritual contagion which enables it to give of its own essence, to draw to it those capable of receiving its imprint, and to create in them some measure of likeness to itself. It is thus that the great leader must create his own agencies, forge his own weapons, and fashion the channels through which the power that is in him is to act. There was little evidence of greatness in the early apostles, when Christ first called them to him; but their later record shows that there was the capacity for receiving greatness, of being kindled by some spark of their Master's fire, of reflecting some facet of his spirit. In no two was exactly the same facet reflected; in no one was the reflection perfect. Each could respond but partially, and none could wholly overcome the Hebraic legalism into which they were born, and which, through them, still obscures the meaning of Christ's teaching. Yet through them, also, was liberated the force which revolutionized the western world. "I make use of the most weak to confound the strong, and it is generally in the despised and poor in spirit that my power is chiefly manifested, in order that they may attribute nothing to themselves." The authenticity of these words, spoken by the Master to a little nun in France, sixteen hundred years after his incarna-

tion in Palestine, needs no other proof than that afforded by his first apostles, but it is verified throughout the whole Christian movement. The world has completely misunderstood the principle of strategy there set forth, and, making no distinction between opposite poles, has commonly confused it with its inverted reflection, and has attributed it to the operation of meanness and jealousy. But as we analyze the history of war we shall find no more fruitful cause of failure than that which this strategy minimizes,—the assumption of greatness and independent action by agents who were great only in their union with their chief. Within The Theosophical Society itself, it has been a causal factor in each of the crises through which we have passed.

No adequate analysis of any historical movement or group of men is possible within the limits set by the pages of the QUARTERLY, but even the most cursory reference to such an example as Marshal Foch suggests, may serve to indicate some of the lessons in the principles of discipleship which the study of history should teach, and show how inevitably and swiftly the karma of the disciple's unconquered moral faults must work out in disaster to the cause he serves, if there be any slackening of his loyalty, any severance in spirit between himself and his Master. We may see how completely the Master must assume the karma of his disciple, and become, in his own person, the "guardian wall" which holds that karma back,—though the only restraining means he can employ are those furnished by his disciple's loyalty. If this fail, all restraint ceases and the wall is swept away. There is scarcely one of Napoleon's Marshals whose life does not blazon forth this truth. The stepping down of the field of effects, from the spiritual to the material plane, neither obscures nor alters the operation of the principles involved; and as we read the story of Napoleon's last campaigns, and see how narrowly victory was missed, time after time both in battle and diplomacy, despite our knowledge that deeper causes must have existed, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that had but one of those who failed him been able to stand firm, had there been but one real inner conquest in the place of blind, unconscious surrender to the innate tendencies of self, Napoleon's downfall might have been averted, and the whole history of Europe changed.

We need not be concerned, in such a study, with the weighing of evidence and the arriving at a true judgment of any individual character. We may take history as we find it, content only to note what it shows. It is certain that in particular cases the true facts must be unknown to history, and probably quite different from what we have been led to suppose. Napoleon was too great a power to be viewed impartially. Much of our knowledge of him and of his Marshals comes to us through the calumnies of frightened and embittered enemies, or through the panegyrics of self-seeking devotees,—neither of which can be safely trusted. Our interest, however, is not primarily in men, but in the principles their lives illumine; and if the action of these principles can be traced on the very face of the record, we need, for our present purpose, to look no deeper. We may take our texts indiscriminately from the familiar histories and biographies of the era, and I shall myself quote or paraphrase

from any of them, whenever it is convenient to do so, without further acknowledgment or apology.

In Napoleon's selection of his Marshals we may observe three principles which are applicable to the formation of every group of disciples.

1. As the spiritual world is open to all, irrespective of their condition in the outer world, so Napoleon drew his instruments from every walk of life. A stable boy or a son of the old noblesse, an artist or a notary, it mattered not at all what they had been, if their nature were capable of responding to the contagion of his genius, and of rising, in at least some particular, to likeness to it.

2. He held personal valour and indomitable resolution to be primary requisites. He took into his own immediate entourage, where they must be entrusted with the knowledge and execution of his plans, only those whom he had himself seen *dare the impossible.* Until this quality of the spirit has been born and roused in a man, he cannot become a chêla. It is no less essential in the agents of genius; for genius, like chêlaship, is the embodiment in man of the creative power of life which transforms the impossible into the possible; which perceives and grasps the potential, hidden from other sight, and by the force of its own will makes of it the actual. But as the Master's vision exceeds the disciple's, so, in their greater undertakings, it will be only the Master who sees the possibility, and the disciple must act without seeing it. He cannot act, or cannot act with the full vigour which is alone capable of achieving success, if the impossible can daunt him,—for then his imagination will inhibit his powers, and a painted stretch of pasteboard will block his advance as surely as would the wall of stone it simulates.

Throughout Napoleon's career, from the turning of his cannon upon the Paris mob and his first crossing of the Alps, it was the "impossibility" of his strategy which made possible his victories. His fate rested always, therefore, upon his ability to command, in his subordinates, an obedience, loyalty and valour, which would act upon the "impossible" as steadfastly and vigorously as upon the possible. His ultimate downfall, the surrender of Paris, and his first abdication, were directly due to the crumbling away of this essential foundation. His Marshals would no longer follow him. The crucial test revealed the slow corrosion their elevation had wrought in the very spiritual quality which had caused it. Their physical courage remained undiminished, but their loyalty and moral valour had been eaten away by their concern for their own rank and dignities. They were no longer willing to front the impossible,—for it is one thing to risk all upon a hope, when hope itself is all one has to risk; it is a very different thing when the height of personal ambition has been attained. It is hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

It would be well if modern aspirants for discipleship could be persuaded to give fuller consideration to the fundamental position which valour must occupy among the disciple's qualities. There would be less talk of impossibilities, less puling sentimentality. When "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob" commanded from the burning bush, was it *possible* for Moses, a condemned murderer and fugitive from Pharaoh's justice, to go to

Pharaoh single-handed, to stand before him with the demand for the liberation of the Jews, and to bring them safely out of Egypt? Was it *possible* for Joan of Arc, a peasant girl scarce seventeen, to win the consent of her parents and her Overlord, to make her way across the half of France, infested by English bands, to galvanize a sodden King and court to action, to raise an army, to relieve Orleans, to triumph in pitched battles, to storm walled towns, and to lead her King to his coronation at Rheims? The children of Israel murmured and lost heart; and because of it wandered for forty years in the desert they could have crossed in fewer days. Charles and his councillors thought enough had been risked and won; and so Paris was not taken—despite Joan's pleadings—and it was only after a further score of years, and Joan's martyrdom, that France was freed from English rule. The Commune, the debacle of 1870, the domination of Prussia, and the world war of 1914, were but some of the karmic consequences which the failure of Napoleon's Marshals contributed to entail,—and that karma has not yet run its course.

If we analyze the "faith" which Christ commended, in those upon whom he worked his miracles, we shall find in its essence the refusal to accept defeat. So central for discipleship is this moral valour, this ability to dare and achieve the impossible, that where it exists all else may be forgiven,—for by its sustained exercise all else may be remedied. It is the key to much that would otherwise be obscure, and may account for the acceptance of an aspirant who manifests few other signs of grace. It is more rarely found in age than in youth; for the imagination of youth, turning naturally to the potentialities of the future, has less respect for the actualities of the present, and is less dominated and blinded by them. Its common concomitants are personal ambition and conceit, by which it may be first fostered but must be ultimately destroyed,—by ambition as ambition is attained; by self-conceit as experience is added,—facts which we have already noted, and shall have occasion to note again. It strikes far deeper and more permanent roots in humility; for the humble man sees only the limitations within himself, and when, in faith and obedience to his Master, he succeeds in overcoming these, he knows no other bounds to possibility.

3. The third principle, illustrated by Napoleon's choice of his Marshals, has been described as the principle of eclecticism. It is, in fact, the principle of group effectiveness. One man, of balanced intellect and rounded faculties, even if these be of no unusual calibre, may be a safer dependence and more desirable agent than one of brilliant but erratic gifts. Where, however, action is to be entrusted to a group, a different principle is operative. The union of ten thousand common minds adds nothing to what is already possessed by each separately, whereas the union of ten minds, each of exceptional ability in its own special field, however lacking elsewhere, constitutes an agency of tremendous power. "It is true, one well balanced intellect is needed to control these conflicting energies, and force them to act in harmony on one great plan, or they will only waste themselves on each other. Bonaparte was such a controlling mind, and he cared not how one-sided the spirits were he gathered about him,

if they only had force: he was after *power*, acting in whatever direction. A combination of men, each of whom could do one thing well, must do all things well. Acting on this principle, he never allowed a man of any striking quality to escape him. Whether it was the cool and intrepid Ney, or the chivalric Murat—the rock-fast Macdonald, or the tempestuous Junot—the bold and careful Soult, or the impetuous Lannes, it mattered not. He needed them all, and he thus concentrated around him the greatest elements of strength that man can wield. It is fearful to see the spirits Napoleon moulded into his plans, and the combined energy he let loose on the armies of Europe. Knowing the moral power of great and striking qualities, he would have no leader without them. In this he showed his consummate knowledge of human nature, especially of Frenchmen. Enthusiasm, and the reliance on one they never trusted in vain in battle, will carry an army further than the severest discipline. A company of conscripts would follow Ney as far as a body of veterans a common leader. So would a column charge with Lannes at their head, when with a less daring and resolute man they would break and fly. Moral power is as great as physical, even where everything depends on hard blows. Mind and will give to the body all its force—so do they also to an army" (J. T. Headley).

In a group of chêlas, or aspirants for chêlaship, this union of dissimilars not only enables the group, as a whole, to be entrusted with responsibility and service in advance of the attainment of any one of its members, but it also promotes the most rapid and symmetric individual growth. Each member is stimulated to strengthen his personal weaknesses—and is compelled to measure them—by the high standards of performance kept constantly before his eyes by those of his fellows who excel where he falls short; while at the same time the friction of close association with those so unlike himself, acts to rub away his angularities and excrescences. United in a common aim and in a common devotion to the Master, reverencing the qualities of his spirit, whether manifesting in him or in one of their own number, and "eagerly anxious" to open their natures to its influx, the sympathetic ties between the members of the group become the channels of a spiritual circulation which carries to each some measure of the attainment of his fellows. The group as a whole, in its rounded symmetry of exceptional powers, serves as a matrix, or mould, which each of its members comes at last to fill with his own person; and when his faculties have been thus developed and fixed, he finds himself able to function on a new and higher plane.

We shall be able to trace very little of this in our study of Napoleon's Marshals. It is true that throughout all the early years they grew with astonishing rapidity in breadth, as well as along the lines of their native powers and genius. What Napoleon said of Lannes, "I found him a dwarf, I lost him a giant," might have been said with equal apparent truth of almost any of the Marshals, had they died, as did Lannes, before the final and crucial test. But it was by Napoleon himself that this growth was elicited and fostered. His Marshals owed everything to him. It was he who was compelled to supplement their deficiencies and to check their excesses; for they consistently and violently refused to learn

anything from one another. So far as inner development is concerned, therefore, they illustrate not the success of their group association, but its failure; and in the final failure, in which they separated themselves from Napoleon, they revealed the continued lack of symmetry of their proportions and the unaltered smallnesses in their natures.

The failures of history, however, have as much to teach us as the successes, and their lessons may be better suited to our need. Every occult power is a two-edged sword, cutting backward or forward in whichever way it is pressed. The same principles of group life that promote the development of the chêla's higher faculties, when animated by devotion to the Master and the hunger for spiritual possessions, must be equally potent in arousing and augmenting the lower nature in one whose loyalty is dependent upon self-interest, and whose aim is personal aggrandizement. As *Light on the Path* points out, the "power which the disciple shall covet is that which shall make him appear as nothing in the eyes of men." The "possessions" he is to desire are those which "must belong to the pure soul only, and be possessed, therefore, by all pure souls equally." The more of honour and wisdom, devotion and loyalty our fellows exemplify, the more we are ourselves stimulated and aided to grow in them. "So nobleness enkindleth nobleness." There can be no exclusion in the infinite world of spiritual reality,—no crowding out of truth by truth, or of attainment by attainment. But the mirror of popular acclaim is small, and can reflect but little at a time; to turn it in one direction is to turn it away from another. Therefore if our aim be not honour but honours, not wisdom but the reputation of being wise, not devotion and loyalty but the special favours and rank which we deem should be their reward, other merit than our own must seem a stumbling block in our path, and every promotion given to another appear as a slight to ourselves. True brotherhood is impossible while the heart is set upon self and its images; it can exist only in loyal devotion to another and in a common aspiration to the Real.

Regarded as a group, therefore, the primary cause of the failure of Napoleon's Marshals lies in the completeness of their externalization, and the consequent inner blindness that caused them to substitute the shadow for the substance, the reflection for the real. Spiritual capacities of a high order existed among them, but they show little evidence of a selfless love of spiritual possessions for their own inherent value. The last thing to which they would have owned was any need or desire to grow in honour or wisdom, devotion or loyalty. For the most part they were obsessed with the conviction that they already possessed these qualities in overflowing measure, and were preoccupied in endeavouring to force a like conviction upon the Emperor and the world. Any appearance of personal shortcomings could be only the result of cruel and unjust misunderstanding, to which they were subjected by prejudice, envy, or the unwarranted suspicion engendered by the slander of their enemies. Any greater recognition given to another, any evidence of higher attainment than their own, became as gall to their wounded vanity,—something they could not and would not brook; to be followed by childish sulks, bitter complaints and recriminations, and en-

during enmities, undermining first their loyalty to each other and then to the Emperor. We cannot wonder, therefore, that they illustrate the failure rather than the success of group association. Friction between such high explosives can result only in disaster.

Do what Napoleon might, he could not cure this self-seeking of his Marshals, nor guard them and France from its consequences. He raised them to rank and dignities and gave them power, beyond anything of which they could have dreamed in the early days; but ambition, once become dominant, knows no slaking and feeds upon itself. The more is given it, the more it hungers. Admonition and rebuke served only to drive the evil beneath the surface, and proved as ineffective as appeals to their loyalty and the promise that he would himself care for their interests. His letters reflect his unceasing efforts. Thus, in a letter dated March 29th, 1808, he writes to Murat, then in Spain:

"I will attend to your private interests; do not trouble yourself about them . . . Let no personal project occupy your thoughts, or guide your conduct; that would injure me, and would injure you still more."

At the same time he writes at length, warning Murat of the complexities and difficulties of the situation in Spain, and urging him to do nothing to commit the French to one side or the other, or to precipitate a crisis.

"Events have been singularly complicated by the transaction of the 20th of March. I find myself very much perplexed. Do not believe that you are about to attack a disarmed people, or that you can, by merely showing your troops, subjugate Spain. . . . You will have to do with a new people. It has all the courage and will display all the enthusiasm, shown by men who are not worn out by political passions. The aristocracy and the clergy are the masters of Spain. If they are alarmed for their privileges and existence, they will bring into the field against us levies *en masse*, which might eternize the war. I am not without partizans. If I present myself as a conqueror, I shall have them no longer. . . . My opinion is that nothing should be hurried forward, and that we should take counsel of events as they occur. . . . I do not approve of the step which your imperial highness has taken in so precipitately making yourself master of Madrid. The army should have been kept ten leagues from the capital. . . . I shall hereafter decide on what is finally necessary to be done. You will not pledge me to an interview in Spain with Ferdinand unless you consider the state of things to be such that I ought to acknowledge him as King of Spain. . . . You will manage so that the Spaniards shall have no suspicion which part I mean to take. You will find the less difficulty in this *as I do not know myself*. You will make the nobility and clergy understand that, if the interference of France be requisite in the affairs of Spain, their privileges and immunities will be respected. . . . You will speak of the splendour of religion, which owes its establishment to the Concordat which I have signed with the Pope. You will explain to them the advantages they may derive from political regeneration—order and peace at home, respect and influence abroad. Such should be the spirit of your conversation and your writings. Do not hazard anything hastily. . . ."

But Murat has already seen a glittering vision of himself as King of Spain, Emperor of the Americas. "Behold at length the moment of recompense had arrived. . . . On whom should the Emperor bestow so splendid a gift but on the man who had borne the burden and heat of the conquest. . . . All Napoleon's brothers and all his sisters had received their share of the conqueror's liberalities. Caroline alone, despite entreaties, tears, cajolery and indignation, had as yet failed to obtain for her husband the crown, which they had so long and so ardently coveted" (*Napoleon and King Murat*, Espitalier).

What could Napoleon's counsel and commands effect in the intoxication of that vision? How was it possible for Murat to believe that "the state of things was such" that Ferdinand should be recognized and established in the kingship which seemed within his own grasp? No, now was the time not for delay but for action. The crisis must be precipitated. His turn must come. "It was to bring matters to a head that he provoked a rising in the heart of the capital which he forthwith repressed, but in a manner so remarkable that his conduct on that occasion can only be ascribed to widely different motives from those which he alleged as the grounds of his action" (Beugnot, *Mémoires*).

Long afterwards, at St. Helena, Napoleon speaks thus to Las Casas: "The impolicy of my conduct in reference to Spain is irrevocably decided by the results. I ought to have given a liberal constitution to the Spanish nation and charged Ferdinand with its execution. . . . That unfortunate war with Spain was a real affliction. It was the first cause of the calamities of France. . . . I was charged in that affair with perfidy, with laying snares, and with bad faith, and yet I was completely innocent. Never, whatever may have been said to the contrary, have I broken any engagement or violated my promise either with regard to Spain or any other Power. . . . I could have preserved myself from these imputations by a little hypocrisy or by giving up the Prince of Peace to the fury of the people. But the idea appeared horrible to me, as if I was to receive the price of blood. Besides it must also be acknowledged that Murat did me a great deal of mischief in the whole affair."

The superior must take the responsibility of his subordinate's actions, even as the Master assumes the karma of the disciple. Neither can protect himself if the restraining bonds of loyalty and obedience yield to the pull of ambition and of self.

There is nothing to show that to the day of his death Murat had the least recognition of what he had done, or of how impossible his own acts had made it for Napoleon to give him the throne of Spain. When he learned that he was to be made King of Naples, and that Joseph was to be transferred to Madrid, he took to his bed in a fever of chagrin and disappointment—the first of many such attacks—but even from his bed he set his agents to work for the aggrandizement of his new position and to obtain everything possible for it from Napoleon. Appointed, in the words of Berthier, to be "his people's King, but his Emperor's Viceroy," he sought to be the first and not the second, rebelling more and more openly against all subordination. "For five years he refused to obey his brother-in-law, for five years he thwarted his plans and carried on an under-

hand warfare against him, till at last he emerged an open and avowed traitor to his Emperor and to France."

We have no space to follow his history here, but we commend its study to all who would trace the karma of vanity and the psychic illusions which it breeds. As has been shrewdly observed, "he lived always in an atmosphere of his own creation." To himself he was always the paladin of romance, and not even the tinsel of his white plumes and blue tights, his caperings and gesturings and his utter lack of statecraft,—no, not even the treachery into which his vanity led him and in which he was engulfed,—could wholly hide the germ of inner truth, the potentiality of the soul, from which the illusion sprang. Speaking of the battle on Mt. Tabor, where he had won instant promotion for the splendour of his personal daring and prowess, he is reported to have said that in the hottest of the fighting he thought of Christ, and of his transfiguration on that very spot nearly two thousand years before, and that from that thought there came to him ten-fold courage and strength. As one of his biographers remarks, "This single fact throws a flood of light on Murat's character, and shows what visions of glory often rose before him in battle, giving to his whole movement and aspect a greatness and dignity that could not be assumed."

Does it seem far fetched to think that if he could have conquered his ambition and his vanity, held himself loyal to his cause and his commander, kept open the channel of thought through which courage and strength increased in him ten-fold, and brought these and his troops to the service of Napoleon in the last critical years, the whole history of Europe might have been changed?

If we turn from Murat to Bernadotte, instead of the vanity of a child, dreaming dreams and resentful that others will not take them seriously, we find a boastful conceit, full-grown and malignant with envy, from the first glimpse that history gives of him. But we have said enough of the great betrayals to show that in war as in occultism, "Ambition is the first curse," and to point the way for such further historical study of its workings as our readers may be led to give. Let us look now, for a moment, at some one of the multitude of lesser betrayals, prompted by the fits of sulks or hurt feelings, personal jealousies or quarrels, which were continually breaking out between Napoleon's Marshals, and which time and again brought on defeat or lost the fruits of victory.

St. Cyr and Moreau may serve as an example. St. Cyr has been ranked as one of the ablest tacticians Napoleon had. "Cold as ice in an emergency," in him "consummate art took the place of a vivid imagination," and "calculation replaced the inspirations of genius so closely that he even knew when he *ought* to be moved by impulse." His conduct at Polotsk and his defence of Dresden show his capacities, but of his service under Moreau, on the Rhine, his biographer is compelled to write as follows:

"At the outset an unhappy cause of division arose between the two generals, which never healed, and ended finally in open rupture. Not satisfied with dividing the army into four corps, each complete in itself, with cavalry, artillery, etc., thus leaving much discretionary power to each general, Moreau insisted on taking the separate command of one corps himself. This St. Cyr

opposed on the ground that his attention would be too much taken up with the affairs of this single corps, and the general movements of the army neglected. The end proved that he was right; but Moreau, persisting in his arrangements, as he most certainly had a right to do, the co-operation of the former was not so hearty and generous as it ought to have been. Thus, at the battle of Engen, and afterwards at Maeskirch, where Moreau was hard pushed, and came near losing the day, St. Cyr did not arrive on the field till the fight was over. The officers around Moreau accused St. Cyr of treachery, and of keeping back on purpose to allow the army to be cut to pieces. But the truth is the latter, *offended at Moreau's procedure*, ceased to concern himself about his movements and confined himself to his own corps. He would not stir without orders, and seemed determined to make Moreau feel the necessity of changing his conduct by *acting the part of a mere machine; moving or stopping as he was bidden and doing nothing more*. Such independent dilatoriness would have cost him his place at once under Bonaparte. His tardiness during the battle of Maeskirch saved the Austrians from a total rout. His excuse for not coming up was that he had received no orders, though Moreau insisted he had sent them. It made no difference, however; he was in hearing of the heavy cannonading in front, and knew that a tremendous struggle was going on, and the fate of an army, perhaps, sealing. Had Desaix acted thus at Marengo, Bonaparte would have lost Italy. Not only did *he* have no orders to march on Marengo, but counter ones to proceed to Novi—yet no sooner did he hear the distant roll of cannon towards the former place than he put his army into motion, and marching it at the top of its speed, arrived just in time to turn a ruinous defeat into a victory."

How much impertinence, sullen insubordination and covert treachery can lie within such a pretence of compliance with orders, such hypocritical semblance of support, rendered with the secret hope that it may fail, and in its failure justify oneself and condemn one's superior! How many high enterprises of discipleship have not been wrecked by this minimum of obedience which is no obedience at all. And how vastly surprised and bitterly indignant those are, who indulge themselves in it, when their karma overtakes them and they are repaid in something of their own coin.

"The next day, however, St. Cyr would have wiped out the remembrance of this negligence, by crushing the Austrian army to pieces, had Moreau not been full of suspicions and averse to everything but the most mathematical regularity. The Austrians, in their retreat, were crowded on the shores of the Danube, in a sort of half circle, made by the bend of the river; so that there was no room to manœuvre, while consternation was visible in their ranks. St. Cyr, though cool and steady, saw at once that by a firm and impetuous charge, he could roll the whole unwieldly mass into the river, and waited anxiously the order to advance. In the meantime he brought forward some of his guns, and trained them on the close packed troops of the enemy. Finding, however, that his cannonading failed to draw the attention of Moreau to the spot, he sent an officer to him requesting permission to charge. But the former refused, either from too great prudence, or, as it is more probable, from want of con-

fidence in the good faith of his general. The opportunity slipped by, and the Austrians made good their passage over the Danube."

St. Cyr had revenged himself on Moreau, and Moreau on St. Cyr; and France paid for both.

We have urged that history be studied as the moving pictures on a screen which depict the outward working and karmic consequences of every inner quality of the human spirit; and we have advanced the thesis that in war, as in discipleship, each inner fault and weakness that is capable of loosening the bonds of loyalty between the subordinate and his chief, must work out swiftly and inevitably in disaster to their common cause. The examples we have so far adduced have been of the cruder vices; and it may, perhaps, be held to require little demonstration that overweening vanity and ambition, personal quarrels and jealousies, should spell defeat where unity is obviously necessary for success. Let us turn, therefore, to a subtler fault,—one which, indeed, is more often considered a virtue than a fault, by those who are afflicted with it,—the habit of sitting in judgment upon all about them, and the insistence upon deciding everything for themselves.

Like Marshal St. Cyr, Marshal Marmont was a son of the smaller nobility, and had been destined and trained for the profession of arms from his boyhood. His father had given him as a motto, "Merit without success is infinitely better than success without merit, but determination and merit always command success." He early distinguished himself, and was given a position on Napoleon's staff. He made a romantic marriage, which turned out most unhappily, and this tended to embitter him and to encase him still further in self. The first incident that we need note is described by an English biographer, whose portrait of Napoleon is so black that everyone else is whitewashed in comparison.

"The Minister of War wanted detailed information regarding the English preparations against invasion, and Bonaparte offered to send his aide-de-camp as a spy. Marmont indignantly refused to go in such a capacity, and a personal estrangement nearly took place. Their standards had nothing in common; in one honour could conquer ambition, in the other ambition knew no rules of honour" (*Napoleon's Marshals*, R. P. Dunn-Patterson).

We shall be concerned to examine the nature of Marmont's "honour" as his life developed it.

From the same biographer we may learn of Marmont's reported prediction to Junot, that Bonaparte would seize the crown upon his return from Egypt, and, later, of his resentment at Bessier's inclusion in a new list of Marshals while he himself was passed over. The Emperor explained to him that his own turn would come soon, but that this was Bessier's only chance. "In spite of this the neglect rankled, and from that day he was no longer the blindly devoted follower of Napoleon." Napoleon's judgment stood condemned in his eyes.

We turn next to his campaign in Spain, where Joseph, for whom Marmont had small respect, had been made King. Napoleon's orders to him, as Massena's successor over the army of Portugal, were precise and peremptory. "But,"

we quote now from J. T. Headley, "Marmont, discouraged, and averse to the position in which he was placed, showed a dilatoriness and want of energy that materially injured the plan of operations marked out for him. . . . But, soon after, he first redeemed his errors, then crowned them by one greater than all, at the battle of Salamanca." Marmont, faced by the Duke of Wellington, resumed the offensive and determined to open his communication with Joseph, which the English had cut off. Joseph was marching up to his relief. "If the two armies could effect a junction the English general was lost, and he strained every nerve to prevent it. Then commenced a series of marches, manœuvres and military evolutions, seldom if ever surpassed by any army." Marmont both outgeneralled and outmarched his adversary. He won the race for Contalpino, where Joseph could join him, "and at night Wellington halted his troops with the painful conviction that he was outflanked," and that Marmont and Joseph together could drive him before them in confusion.

"But at this crisis Marmont overthrew all his hopes, and by one of those rash and inconsiderate movements ruined his army and deeply tarnished his fame." If he waited for Joseph and Jourdan, he would be superseded in his command; decisions would be taken out of his hands and placed in hands he did not trust, and the glory of the victory, too, would be theirs. Had it not been for this unconquered weakness in Marmont's nature—that he could respect no one but himself—"statues to the Duke of Wellington would not have filled, as now, the public squares and edifices of England." Marmont did not wait for Joseph and certain victory. He attempted an encircling movement with his own forces, and laying himself open to attack, gave Wellington his chance. Instead of the victory that was within his grasp, Marmont was utterly defeated, his army crushed and routed, and he himself borne from the field with a wound which lost him his arm.

"Bonaparte was filled with indignation. . . . He declared that Marmont's dispatch to him, explaining his defeat, had more trash and complication in it than a clock. He ordered the Minister of War to demand why he had delivered battle without orders from the King—why he had not followed out the general plan of the campaign—why he had taken the offensive, when sixteen or seventeen thousand men were in two days' march to reinforce him. In conclusion he was forced to think that he had sacrificed to vanity, the glory of his country and the good of the common cause. Still, remembering his old friendship, he, in the height of his just wrath, ordered all these questions to be delayed, till Marmont had entirely recovered from his wounds."

These early incidents, revealing Marmont's distrust of all other judgment than his own, and his inability to yield the decision to another, explain, as does nothing else, his part in the closing scenes of the Napoleonic drama. In 1814, he fought brilliantly beside the Emperor to check the Allies' advance on Paris. When left alone with Mortier, he continued the struggle, so long as he himself felt that there was a possibility of success. Though Mortier was his senior, it was Marmont who made all decisions; and when his own judgment told him that the odds were too heavy against them, he was obsessed with the need

to act upon that judgment while he was still in a position to give it effect. Napoleon had passed Fontainebleau, "burning the road" and leaving dying horses in his track, in his speed to reach his capital and to reinforce its defence. Twelve hours more and he would be there. Twelve hours more and the decision would be no longer in Marmont's hands. Marmont surrendered Paris.

But Napoleon himself was still a power to be reckoned with; and it was only the refusal of his Marshals to follow him further—with Ney's curt statement that the troops would obey their commanders—that prevented his continuing the struggle. Finally he agreed to yield, if an abdication would be accepted in favour of his son, and Caulaincourt, Ney and Macdonald pressed this upon the Czar, who had promised to respect the desires of the French people.

But once more Marmont must act on his own judgment, contemptuous of all opinion but his own, and distrustful that the Emperor might yet withdraw his assent. In his own eyes further effort was useless, and therefore, to his peculiar temperament, it became his duty to prevent Napoleon from further sacrificing his troops and imposing a hopeless struggle upon France. On the night in which the Czar was to decide the question of the regency, Marmont ordered his twelve thousand troops to leave Napoleon's camp, and moved them over to the Allies. The men, when they found they had been betrayed, swore at their leaders in helpless fury. But it was then too late. When the news reached the Czar, he exclaimed to Pozzo de Borgo, "You see, it is Providence that wills it; no more doubt or hesitation now."

The Empire was at an end.

Between such "honour" and black treachery, only Marmont could distinguish; and to that task the remainder of his life was given.

We have quoted enough. Let us close our books, and give our imagination rein. What if our parallel were more than a parallel? Are the great Masters of life concerned only with individual souls, or with lilies and churches, lepers and rheumatic scrubwomen? Have they no interest in the fate of nations, no love and reverence for national genius, no will to preserve for the future what has been won so hardily from the past? Are they themselves not warriors and generals in the inner world, and must not their disciples in the outer world have some measure of likeness to them? In what more likely place should we look for their agents than in the wars where national existence was at stake? Why should not Napoleon, Cæsar, Alexander, have been disciples,—their aides disciples of less degree? Disciples are not perfect men; they are those whose devotion enables them to dare the impossible. Such work must be dirty and perilous; but someone must do it. It must require the surrender of vision that has been gained; of refinements that have been won. It must be like a diver, working in the mud and weeds of a harbour bed, far beneath the surface,—a bursting pressure in his ears and lungs, able to see but dimly, if at all, and all his faculties and movements hindered by the armour in which he is encased,—or as a man working among savages beyond the outposts of civilization. There is no telling what his fate may be; he takes his life in his own hands, trusts it to

his own powers and to the powers and fidelity of his comrades. Must there not be such adventures as this by the servants of the Lodge?

If we think of Napoleon and his Marshals thus, as disciples of greater or less degree, how then does their adventure seem to us? Did they fail wholly? They lifted France from the mire of the Revolution and saved her to the world, —saved her to save Europe and civilization. What if they did fall the victims of their own weaknesses, blacken their souls with treachery and dishonour? So does the diver drown when his life line fouls; so does the Alpine climber fall when giddy with mountain sickness, or when his rope frays and parts on a crag; so are men slain in battle; so are they crushed by tasks too great for them, which they yet dared, and which, even in their own death, they in some measure achieve.

Were our fancy true, and not mere fancy, what would be their souls' desire, when their task was done? Would it not be the same as that of any other soldier returning from the trenches, any other adventurer, again, for a brief time, in touch with civilization? I think it would be first to go and *wash;* to scrub away the slime and filth that covered them, and to feel themselves once more human and civilized. And next, I think that they would want to overhaul their kit,—to patch it up and supplement it in the light of their experience, profiting from the lessons of their failures. They would deem the time well spent in this, before they turned again to where it would be impossible. Once in the wilderness, there is no going back for what has been overlooked; no possibility of replacing a frayed rope by a new. One must then do the best one can with what one has; and if the rope breaks, it breaks.

Therefore, if they could have asked a guerdon of the Lodge they served, I think it would be this: that they be given the chance to conquer, once and for all, the faults that had betrayed them; that they be permitted one brief incarnation in the light, an incarnation in which they could *see,*—as preparation for a new adventure in the dark, where they would again be blind.

Fate was kinder to Napoleon than to his Marshals, for he had earned more than they; and therefore he had his years at St. Helena, in which to review and fasten on his soul the lessons of his mistakes. But there was then little possibility of remedying them, of correcting whatever he found amiss within himself. His soul, too, must have craved the chance to work upon itself with open eyes.

Perhaps they were granted that guerdon. Perhaps, as the reward of all they dared and did in the century that has gone, and in preparation for the "Next time" that is to come, they may have *earned* such privileges as are now ours,—ours as the unearned gifts of the Masters' great compassion,—the chance to work, in the white light of the theosophic teaching and with open eyes, upon those unconquered "little" faults that cause disaster.

HENRY BEDINGER MITCHELL.

THE TOTAL ECLIPSE

SCIENTIFICALLY trained members of the T. S. and students of *The Secret Doctrine* of Madame Blavatsky undoubtedly may explain something of the occult significance of total eclipses. Such a great aspect of the recent phenomenon is not one which this particular writer is qualified to discuss. What has been living in his mind since its occurrence is the question of what may be revealed by some of the human reactions to the total eclipse in 1925.

Anyone who has ever been at all in contact with astronomers and astrophysicists knows how they look forward to a total eclipse. Months of time are spent in preparation for accurate observation and for its accumulation of material for later study. When it has been necessary, hard and even dangerous trips have been made to lonely isles of the Pacific and Indian Oceans or into the heart of fever-laden wildernesses. No effort, no sacrifice has seemed too great to be given to the effort to get for science whatever those rare and vital one hundred and twenty seconds of time may present.

This year a total eclipse was made easily accessible to hundreds of thousands of Americans of all classes and grades. What did the experience reveal?

The newspapers did their best—according to their standards. As a well-known "popular science" writer has put it: "Nothing has ever been better press-agented than this total eclipse." The result was that hundreds of thousands of people determined that they would see the eclipse in the path of totality. There was an enormous outpouring of physical effort, in circumstances of physical inconvenience, on the part of those thousands of excited and emotional Americans, of all classes, of all races, and of all grades of intelligence. They called this effort "sacrifice." To many of them it meant getting up early in the morning, dressing in chilled rooms, motoring in the cold, or travelling in stuffy, overheated railway cars, and then trudging over ice and snow to slippery hill tops, where winds swept with unrelenting frigidness.

What was it which really inspired such an outpouring of energy? Was it that devotion to science, so praised by the author of *Light on the Path?* Undoubtedly praiseworthy motives controlled many, especially those associated with scientific parties from the astronomical observatories and physical laboratories of our universities and colleges. But was it self-sacrificing devotion to science—or to what—that inspired this great twentieth century crusade from comfortable homes to the frozen country side?

Among those who are fortunately ignorant, that is to say, whose ignorance has not been complicated by undue development of the psychic nature, there was undoubtedly a strong personal reaction to totality. To such a nature there was something appalling, and hence impressive, in the blanketing of the sun, slowly conquered by the onward-moving moon. Awe was excited in such

natures by the stupendous changes and aspects wrought by what the Chinese call the swallowing of the Sun by the dark dragon of the Moon. But, at least over the Connecticut hillside, there were few such people of fortunate ignorance. Most of them were unwittingly ignorant in that they thought themselves wise, whereas they were dominated by psychism. To the astronomers and scientists, the eclipse, undoubtedly, was impressive. Perhaps on a few meditative persons it may have made a deep impression, stimulated wholesome awe and respect for the Powers That Be, whatever their nature.

But it is a good deal to ask of a thrill-mongering, sensation-seeking people that they be impressed by reality, even on the physical plane. Most of the people who saw the eclipse were secretly disappointed in it as a spectacle. They could not have explained why. They did not try to explain. They rested content in the gratification of having something that others did not have. Pleasure came to them from the consciousness that they were among the comparatively limited few who participated in totality. This gave them that sense of personal superiority, which may explain why people buy books they do not enjoy, or automobiles they cannot afford, and indulge themselves in other similarly ridiculous ways.

Yet there was an opportunity to be seized in studying one's own reactions to the great spectacle. It was a clinical demonstration, available to any thoughtful person, of the probable validity of the Oriental analysis of varying planes of human consciousness.

The eclipse may not have been impressive as a simple, visual spectacle, without support from understanding, memory, will, and imagination. There was nothing to gratify Kama Manas in it. The psychic desire did not obtain gratification at the moment of totality. Psychism was awakened only in the sense of separateness, from having something that others could not have, both before and after the eclipse; but at the moment there was in most cases only the reaction of disappointment. "Is this all that I get for all that I have given?" was probably the unspoken comment of thousands.

It was only as one controlled psychism and emotionalism, to rise to the right use of imagination, memory and understanding, that the full meaning of what one was watching could be at all appreciated.

Perhaps the most impressive thoughts were these: astronomers and physicists, by study and application of their observations, have worked out laws which enabled them to say that in this small strip of territory at a set time there would be totality, and not half a mile away or five minutes earlier or later. Second came the thought of how insignificant we human beings are, as physical factors. In the crowds that tramped from train to hill top there was a sense of overpowering numbers; but in that strange light of amazing shadows and revealed true values, there came a sensation of the pitiable insignificance of the human race on the purely physical plane.

The third interesting reaction was the thought that it is only through ignorance that the Solar God in man can be eclipsed by the Lunar Dragon of

sin. The corona gave light and proved the immortality of solar life, even when the pall was completely drawn.

In the light of the revelation of the silliness and stupidity of psychism, selfishness, and separateness, within oneself at such a time, it is interesting to see how controlling these lower factors attempt to be in all one's attitude towards life. How much of my so-called "sacrifice" is really for others, and how much is inspired by self-indulgence and self-gratification?

Moreover, times come in one's life when it seems as if the lunar, or lower self—so graphically portrayed in *The Voice of the Silence*—were totally eclipsing the solar or higher self, within one's own sphere of consciousness. Panic and surrender may begin. If so, the teachings of the past should take the place of the plans of the astronomers and astrophysicists in regard to the total eclipse of the sun. It is for us to plan and prepare for eclipses within ourselves, and to make sure that they shall be ephemeral in effect, not permanent in their reactions and hence death-dealing. We know that under the law of cycles the lunar body will swing across our consciousness, with all its dread darkness revealed, no longer camouflaged by stolen light reflected in inversion. We may prepare for this. We may be ready even to learn its lesson. We may be on guard against its reactions and their residua. We may even use it to awaken love, praise, and thankful ess that the Centre of our own solar system cannot be obscured in fact. If, in moments of dryness or darkness, we are prepared to watch for the corona of the immortal true self—"proved servant to Master and loyal brother to all Seekers"—we shall rejoice in the beauty and power of the "Solar God"—our Higher Self—and know that It is the Warrior of *Light on the Path:* "—then will he fight in thee and fill the dull void within. And if this is so, then canst thou go through the fight cool and unwearied, standing aside and letting him battle for thee. Then it will be impossible for thee to strike one blow amiss. But if thou look not for him, if thou pass him by, then there is no safeguard for thee. Thy brain will reel, thy heart grow uncertain, and in the dust of the battle-field thy sight and senses will fail, and thou wilt not know thy friends from thy enemies. He is thyself, yet thou art but finite and liable to error. He is eternal and is sure. He is eternal truth."

Each day of our lives—if we be students of Theosophy half as eager and energetic as are students of astronomy and astrophysics—we may find great events happening in the celestial dome of our own consciousness. These we may use or abuse. If we use them, we may progress in the science of right living. If we abuse them they will be feeders of the psychic and producers of evil, just as fully as in the case of the thrill-mongers and sensation-seekers who watched the total eclipse of 1925. The High Gods offer us heaven daily. Why, oh! why will we insist upon remaining in hell. We are "as the gods" in our power to choose. What idiocy not to exercise our divine privilege! Our sin would be folly—were it not for the seriousness of the harm it does—especially to those who love us.

SERVETUS.

CHHANDOGYA UPANISHAD

The Parable of the Sun

THE closing verses of this Parable of the Sun tell us that it is a part of the Secret Teaching; more than that, it is a part of the primeval wisdom impressed on the minds of the earliest human beings by the Divine Spirit who presided over the inception of our race. We should, therefore, be prepared to find in it many spiritual meanings, each in conformity with the Secret Doctrine.

First, there is the teaching regarding the sun. We may take as a basis of comparison what has been said of the sun by an Aryan Master, summed up in these words: "The sun is neither a solid nor a liquid, nor yet a gaseous glow, but a gigantic ball of electro-magnetic Forces, the store-house of universal life and motion, from which the latter pulsate in all directions, feeding the smallest atom as the greatest genius with the same material unto the end of the Maha Yuga." In this sense, therefore, "the sun is the honey of the bright powers," the term Deva, which has been translated "bright powers," and which comes from a root meaning "shine" or "radiate," including the bright powers on all planes, up to the most spiritual, the various classes of Planetary Spirits, who, descending into incarnation in our world, become human beings, and who are destined to reascend to the divine worlds.

Regarding the appearance of the succeeding veils or vestures of the sun, there is a close correspondence between the observations of modern astronomy and what is taught in this Upanishad. There is, first, the "red form" of the sun, the rose-coloured chromosphere, a part of which was plainly visible to the naked eye during the recent eclipse, and which could, therefore, have been seen as easily during any total eclipse ten thousand years ago. It is a throbbing, surging veil of shining rose colour, which encloses the luminous globe of the sun with a covering many thousands of miles deep. Within it is the "luminous form," now called the photosphere, from which we receive the sunlight, shining through the rose-coloured veil. Astronomy has discovered that the luminous globe of the sun is not a continuous surface, but is made up of immense luminous flakes or grains, which, because of their shape, have been compared to grains of rice or willow leaves. Sir John Herschel said of them: "The definite shape of these objects, their exact similarity one to another . . . all these characters seem quite repugnant to the notion of their being of a vaporous, a cloudy, or a fluid nature. . . . Nothing remains but to consider them as separate and independent sheets, flakes . . . having some sort of solidity. . . . Be they what they may, they are evidently the immediate sources of the solar light and heat. . . . Looked at from this point of view, we cannot refuse to regard them as organisms of some peculiar

and amazing kind; and though it would be too daring to speak of such organization as partaking of the nature of life, yet we do know that vital action is competent to develop at once heat, and light, and electricity." Commenting on this, an Occultist says that these wonderful objects are "the reservoirs of solar vital energy, the vital electricity that feeds the whole system in which it lives, and breathes, and has its being." Or, as our Upanishad puts it, "the sun is the honey of the bright powers."

At certain times, on certain areas of the sun, these luminous flakes appear to drift apart, or to be driven apart; the spaces which they disclose are dark, and are known as sun spots. These also are not infrequently visible to the naked eye, as black flecks on the face of the sun. They are surrounded by a dark penumbra with a darker centre, and astronomers believe that these darker layers everywhere underlie the luminous layer. So that we have also the "dark form" and the "very dark form" of the sun, in the words of the Upanishad. The article in *Five Years of Theosophy*, from which we have just quoted, further speaks of "the true Sun, an invisible orb of which the known one is the shell, mask or clothing," corresponding, it would seem, to "that which throbs in the heart of the sun," as the Upanishad puts it. This appears to be the first, or astronomical, meaning of our Parable.

In the Upanishad, the four Vedas, the Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda and Atharva Veda, with the Secret Instructions as fifth, are taken as the basis or framework of a series of correspondences. To come close to the thought of the teaching, we should remember that a verse of the Rig Veda, for example, is not regarded simply as a phrase, a set of words, a fragment of a descriptive poem. The verse is conceived to be a potent force, a magical incantation depending on the occult correlations of sounds and vibrations in the spiritual ether, the Akasha. The Mantra is a vital force, rather than a bit of literature. It thus has its correspondence with the vital forces radiated from the sun.

Therefore, the four Vedas and the Secret Instructions are taken to represent five ascending planes or worlds of living energy, while the verses represent the powers possessed by the beings on each of these planes; what have been called the ascending, or descending, degrees of the Planetary Spirits, some of which are more backward than man, while others are far more advanced. They are what man has been, and what man is destined to become.

It will follow that man contains within him either the actuality or the potentiality of all the powers manifested in the different degrees of Planetary Spirits. He has developed the powers of those which are in the descending cycle behind him; he possesses the potentiality of the powers of those which are in the ascending cycle ahead of him. Therefore, man, the microcosm, sums up within himself all the powers of the macrocosm.

This Upanishad adopts a fivefold classification of the principles of man, which appears to correspond closely with the fivefold classification ot the vestures, or sheaths, of the *Taittiriya Upanishad*. Beginning with the lowest, these are: the vesture formed of food; the vesture formed of life-breath;

the vesture formed of mind; the vesture formed of understanding; the vesture formed of bliss. The highest of these vestures corresponds with, and is revealed by, the Secret Instructions. It is the Higher Self, which, "rising above, shall rise no more, nor go to his setting any more."

So we have an indication at least of the astronomical, the macrocosmic and the microcosmic interpretations of our Parable of the Sun. Regarding man, the Parable tells us that, on each successive plane, his powers go forth and gather the essence of that plane, making him a vesture of this essence, weaving it into the substance of his being. So experience is converted into enduring substance. The man grows, until he reaches the full stature of the immortal Higher Self, to which he carries upward the essence, the gleaned experience, of each successive plane and world.

The ascending excellence of these planes and worlds appears to be symbolized by the increasing periods attributed to each, in the poetical phrases regarding the rising and setting of the sun. Without doubt, the Parable of the Sun has further, deeper meanings, which are beyond the ken of the present interpreter.

THE PARABLE[1]

The sun yonder is the honey of the bright powers. The dome of the sky is the bent bamboo supporting it. The luminous air within the dome is the mass of honey combs. The sun's rays are the brood.

The sun's eastern rays, verily, are the eastern honey cells. The Rig verses are the honey gatherers. The Rig Veda, verily, is the blossom. The nectars are the currents. As honey gatherers, verily, the Rig verses brooded over the Rig Veda. From it, brooded over, were born fame, radiance, power, valour and food, its essence. The essence flowed; it wrapped itself about the sun. This, verily, is that red form of the sun.

And so the sun's southern rays, verily, are the southern honey cells. The Yajur verses are the honey gatherers. The Yajur Veda, verily, is the blossom. The nectars are the currents. As honey gatherers, verily, the Yajur verses brooded over the Yajur Veda. From it, brooded over, were born fame, radiance, power, valour and food, its essence. The essence flowed; it wrapped itself about the sun. This, verily, is that luminous form of the sun.

And so the sun's western rays, verily, are the western honey cells. The Sama verses are the honey gatherers. The Sama Veda, verily, is the blossom. The nectars are the currents. As honey gatherers, verily, the Sama verses brooded over the Sama Veda. From it, brooded over, were born fame, radiance, power, valour and food, its essence. The essence flowed; it wrapped itself about the sun. This, verily, is that dark form of the sun.

And so the sun's northern rays, verily, are the northern honey cells. The Atharva-Angirasa verses are the honey gatherers. The histories and tradi-

[1] Part III, Sections 1–11. The earlier Parts of this Upanishad are too technical to be of general interest.

tions are the blossom. The nectars are the currents. As honey gatherers, verily, the Atharva-Angirasa verses brooded over the histories and traditions. From them, brooded over, were born fame, radiance, power, valour and food, their essence. The essence flowed; it wrapped itself about the sun. This, verily, is the very dark form of the sun.

And so the sun's rays which go upward are the upper honey cells. The Secret Instructions are the honey gatherers. The Eternal is the blossom. The nectars are the currents. As honey gatherers, verily, the Secret Instructions brooded over the Eternal. From the Eternal, brooded over, were born fame, radiance, power, valour and food, its essence. The essence flowed; it wrapped itself about the sun. This, verily, is that which throbs, as it were, in the heart of the sun.

These, verily, are the essences of the essences. For the Vedas are the essences, and these are their essences. These are the nectars of the nectars. For the Vedas are the nectars, and these are their nectars.

That which is the first nectar, on that the bright powers called Vasus live with Agni, the Fire-lord, as their leader. These bright powers, verily, do not eat or drink, but beholding that nectar they are sated. They, verily, enter into that red form and ascend from that red form. He, verily, who truly knows this nectar, becoming one of the Vasus with Agni, the Fire-lord, as his leader, beholding that nectar, verily, is sated. He, verily, enters into that red form, and from that red form he ascends.

As long as the sun shall rise from the east and shall go to his setting in the west, so long shall he fully possess overlordship and sovereignty over the Vasus.

And so that which is the second nectar, on that the bright powers called Rudras live, with Indra as their leader. These bright powers, verily, do not eat nor drink, but beholding that nectar they are sated. They, verily, enter into that luminous form and ascend from that luminous form. He, verily, who truly knows this nectar, becoming one of the Rudras with Indra as his leader, beholding that nectar, verily, is sated. He, verily, enters into that luminous form, and from that luminous form he ascends.

As long as the sun shall rise from the east and shall go to his setting in the west, twice as long shall the sun rise from the south and go to his setting in the north; so long shall he fully possess overlordship and sovereignty over the Rudras.

And so that which is the third nectar, on that the bright powers called Adityas live, with Varuna as their leader. These bright powers, verily, do not eat nor drink, but beholding that nectar they are sated. They, verily, enter into that dark form and ascend from that dark form. He, verily, who truly knows this nectar, becoming one of the Adityas with Varuna as his leader, beholding that nectar, verily, is sated. He, verily, enters into that dark form, and from that dark form he ascends.

As long as the sun shall rise from the south and shall go to his setting in the north, twice as long shall the sun rise from the west and go to his setting in the

east; so long shall he fully possess overlordship and sovereignty over the Adityas.

And so that which is the fourth nectar, on that the bright powers called Maruts live, with Soma as their leader. These bright powers, verily, do not eat nor drink, but beholding that nectar they are sated. They, verily, enter into that very dark form and ascend from that very dark form. He, verily, who truly knows this nectar, becoming one of the Maruts with Soma as his leader, beholding that nectar, verily, is sated. He, verily, enters into that very dark form, and from that very dark form he ascends.

As long as the sun shall rise from the west and shall go to his setting in the east, twice as long shall the sun rise from the north and go to his setting in the south; so long shall he fully possess overlordship and sovereignty over the Maruts.

And so that which is the fifth nectar, on that the bright powers called Sadhyas live, with Brahma as their leader. These bright powers, verily, do not eat nor drink, but beholding that nectar they are sated. They, verily, enter into that form which throbs in the heart of the sun, and from that form they ascend. He, verily, who truly knows this nectar, becoming one of the Sadhyas with Brahma as his leader, beholding that nectar, verily, is sated. He, verily, enters into that form which throbs in the heart of the sun, and from that form he ascends.

As long as the sun shall rise from the north and shall go to his setting in the south, twice so long shall the sun rise above and go to his setting beneath; so long shall he fully possess overlordship and sovereignty over the Sadhyas. And so after that, rising above, the sun shall rise no more, nor go to his setting any more, but shall stand alone in the midst.

Therefore, there is this verse: There is no setting there, nor any rising for ever. O bright powers, through this truth may I never be divided from the Eternal!

For him, verily, there is neither rising nor setting, for him it is everlasting day, who knows this Secret Teaching of the Eternal.

That is that which Brahma declared to Prajapati, Prajapati to Manu, Manu to the descendants. This Eternal his father declared to Uddalaka Aruni, his eldest son. This, verily, should a father declare to his eldest son, or to a fully qualified disciple, but not to any other. Even if any should offer him this world which is surrounded by the waters, filled with wealth, this Teaching is greater than that, it is greater than that.

C. J.

(To be continued)

SOME ASPECTS OF FAITH AND BELIEF

THERE are three main methods of approach to religious or philosophical beliefs, if one hold, as does the writer, that they are incapable of exact scientific demonstration, in the ordinary sense of that term. The first might be described as a reverent but perfectly logical agnosticism. It has the obvious disadvantage of being purely negative, and consequently fails to evolve a philosophical system which renders happiness superior to the accidents of fate or circumstance. For this reason, the great majority of people have never cared for agnosticism, and will continue to seek some answer to the riddles of existence. Perhaps the most popular method of approach has been to base beliefs on faith in the "revelations" of religious teachers and in the testimony of "saints" and "disciples,"—there being confidence that the truth of the belief has been established by their personal experience. Perfection may lead to omniscience, but no one is content to wait so long a time for knowledge, and many religious beliefs are capable of some type of philosophical endorsement, the third method of approach.

Without a careful definition of terms, beliefs based on faith might be made to appear quite ridiculous, and one of the rarest of gifts thus be brought into contempt and disrepute. This seems to be particularly true today. The advance of science made popular a re-examination of many old beliefs in the light of new discoveries, and little or nothing was found to endorse them. On all sides we see people who have "lost faith" in what they had, but who have been incapable of using the opportunities afforded them to procure an improved substitute. We are beginning to realize that having no religion is worse than having a foolish one, and that intellectual emancipation from a narrow theology is a dangerous thing, when the individual is not sufficiently evolved to acquire a broader philosophy. It is true that the discoveries of science have not endorsed the existence of a hell where bad people burn for ever; but the social decay, the thirst for individual liberty, the decline of morals, and the increase of lawlessness make it all too apparent that the world is amply supplied with people who need some such crude fear of consequences to induce them to practise restraint.

Two inferences can be drawn at this point. The first is that the validity of a man's faith and the reasons he can give to endorse it will be in direct proportion to his intellectual development; and if he have no intellectual development, he can either believe in nothing, or believe what he is told by some one of superior competence. To sneer at his beliefs, then, is both foolish and dangerous. The Roman Catholic Church is often criticized for the large demands it is alleged to make on the credulity of its votaries, but people should pause to

appreciate the enormous service it performs for civilization in keeping much of the peasantry of Europe a lap or two ahead of relative barbarism. Surely it is more important to induce such people to make some moral effort, than to try to render their theology intellectually up to date, when they are incapable of real intellection. In one sense, therefore, we are responsible for the faith of our inferiors. It is their right to expect us to confirm and strengthen it, to absolve their doubts, and to help them as they stumble blindly on. If we laugh at their intellectual defects our quarrel will have to be with God rather than with them.

There is a second class of people, however, whose religious beliefs are the product of the accidents of environment plus a large share of laziness or cowardice. They are Episcópalians, let us say, because their parents were Episcopalians. They were confirmed at the age of fifteen, at which time they swallowed the Nicene Creed at one gulp, and have always professed to believe it ever since. Thus properly inducted, as it were, into the limbo of Christian respectability and conformity, they have never given religion any further consideration. They believe in the Virgin Birth, but they cannot give an intelligible explanation of what they mean by it. They may be too lazy to study or think about religion, and often they do not dare—it might, perchance, arouse a slumbering conscience. Several other well-known types belong to this class, differing according to factors in their inner development. One is the intolerant bigot, whose own theology is so insufficiently endorsed, that he dare not risk investigating another, and becomes angry at the slightest sign of heterodoxy. Another finds that his beliefs do not adequately sustain him in the trials of life: he thinks that more "faith" is the proper solution of his troubles: he either gets more of what he calls faith or he does not, but the really essential elements are left to Fate. A third condition is perhaps the worst of all. It is that of the person who is absolutely satisfied with a narrow creed, which he is convinced represents the whole, perfect and only Truth,—but whose life does not prove it in the slightest particular. He is little more than an intellectual will-o'-the-wisp. Many other types will doubtless occur to the reader, but enough has perhaps been said to draw the obvious moral: the so-called "faith" of all these people is a hopelessly negative one, and does not inspire respect.

It is small wonder, then, that the ranks of the skeptics and irreverent agnostics are largely recruited from this class. A generation ago the narrow theologist, who accepted the finding of science that the world was not created in the year 4004 B.C., lost his hold on Christianity completely. At first sight it may not seem clear just how the appeal of the Passion of Christ and His teaching was so tangled with the chronology of Archbishop Ussher, but the truth is, such people could not see the forest for the trees. The reason is simple: they had never really seen the forest, and when the nearest trees were cut down, their landscape was obliterated. I know a phlegmatic man of this kind whose father died in the fulness of time. About a week later the son announced to a shocked circle of friends that the death of his father had caused him to "lose

his faith," and various plans were hastily concocted to get it back for him. Now it is absolutely certain that everybody's father is bound to die, and such an event, sorrowful as it may well be, is scarcely sufficient to invalidate one of the world's great religions. My acquaintance described his own condition exactly. He had always been a sober and sincere Christian, had fulfilled all the necessary observances punctually; he had done so surrounded by people who did nothing of the sort, and yet they were care-free and successful. It was not fair that he should be stricken, and his faith in the blessings of a Christian life was destroyed. The truth is that he had "too much Ego in his cosmos," and his so-called faith was such a flimsy house of cards that the first puff of adversity toppled it over.

But fortunately there is a third type of faith, the real "faith with works" of St. Paul, a positive force, radiant and splendid with action and accomplishment. It is a very rare quality, possessed by few people, but we may at least be allowed to admire it from a distance. It has performed seeming miracles, saved nations, and led to great discoveries. It does not depend for its validity upon intellectual endorsement; the latter, however, will always be used to strengthen it. Joan of Arc had faith that France could be freed from the foreign English yoke, but she could not have proved it scientifically in advance. Columbus could not prove that the world was round, but the strength of his convictions enabled him to discover the New World. Sir Isaac Newton lived in an age when exact science was in its infancy, and few indeed were the natural phenomena for which a definite cause was known. But he had an unshakeable faith that there was a reason why an apple should fall to the ground, and so discovered the Law of Gravitation. Christ had an utterly transcendent faith in the power and reality of the spiritual world, and his life and sayings bore such splendid witness to his convictions, that even to-day millions wonder, and feel stirring within them the germ of their own spirituality. The real endorsement of true faith has always been action, a life moulded in accord with the glimpse of truth perceived, the result often a success so great that it has become an event in history. Those who have sneered have lived to be ashamed. Those who have hated have lived to be despised or overthrown. Let us by all means distinguish between true faith and its negative imitation, so characteristic of much of the *soi-disant* religion of to-day, yesterday, and to-morrow.

Little has yet been said about the philosophical endorsement of religious beliefs. It is most useful to those who lack the gift of true faith. There is nothing objectionable in doing whatever lies in one's power to confirm and strengthen whatever germ of faith or belief one may have. If conscientiously pursued, it will help to eliminate much bigotry at one end of the scale, much crude or time-worn theology at the other. Such endorsement will perhaps bring about the day when belief can be transformed into action in daily life, and the beginning will have been made which will ultimately result in spiritual illumination. But it must be rem mbered that intellectual exercise alone will never solve spiritual riddles, or put us into possession of the real truth. The

intellect is an instrument, which is or should be useful, but the mind of imperfect man cannot possibly mirror aught but a feeble reflection of the Absolute,—just as the patient mole can accomplish its proper destiny, but it will never really comprehend the human beings it may encounter. Nor can the instrument of one plane adequately reflect the conditions of a higher plane. There will always be religious questions, there will always be spiritual riddles, there will always be skeptics, until intellection, the faculty of the mental plane, has become transformed into illumination, the faculty of the spiritual plane. In this connection no religious teacher ever asked his disciples to swallow a mass of theology. Christ most certainly did not. Such religious precepts as they were given, they were asked to work out for themselves; the conviction of their truth could only come through personal experience. This is one way of describing the principle of scientific experiment. The student of chemistry cannot discover the properties of oxygen without performing, as directed, the necessary experiments. The teacher, no matter how learned, cannot prove to him the properties of oxygen, if he refuse to perform these experiments. The absurdity of refusing to perform chemical experiments until the reality of the properties of oxygen have been proved, must be patent to all. Most of us, however, object strenuously to performing the experiments in our lives necessary to the discovery of the reality of a religious truth, until its reality has been intellectually determined beforehand. We must often appear very absurd in the eyes of "whatever gods there be."

The foregoing aspects of faith and belief would seem to apply to so-called theosophical doctrines as much as to any others. In their present-day expression they cannot possibly be the ultimate, ineffable truth. They cannot be scientifically demonstrated. We have seen the relation between faith and belief, religion and theology. Each member of the T. S. can make of the theosophical teaching what he will. He can make a creed out of it, or a new theology; he can accept it too lightly and appear foolish; he can seek to endorse it philosophically in whole or in part. Only in the latter case can he hope to influence others or interest them, since every one should be able to bear some witness to his beliefs. But a theosophical creed is no better than any other creed if it lead to nothing; or at least the possessor thereof will have gained nothing by his exchange. He can be as narrow a bigot, as gullible a fool, as self-satisfied a cad as any holder of any other creed. If he get too involved with Fohat, the Lipikas, and the Tattwas, he may well live to regret the simple faith of his forefathers, and he might be better off if he had never left it. It is the writer's conviction that the real heart of Theosophy is the age-old emphasis on "works" and action, the vital necessity of "living the life to know the doctrine." Perhaps this emphasis is needed to-day because ancient faiths are dormant, leaving in the outer world only their husks, some forms and ceremonies. But it is the only scientific experiment that has a double reward. For if you live the life, you understand the Kingdom of Heaven and attain it at the same time.

F.

PYTHAGORAS

II

If anyone should say, "I am God," let him create a world like this and declare, "This is my work"; but he must not only declare, "This is my work," for he must inhabit and fill the world he has created, as the True God has done by this.

PYTHAGORAS.

"ACCORDING to the Pythagoreans," said Aristotle, "numbers are things. Because the properties of objects may be defined by numbers, these philosophers have concluded that all things, even physical bodies, are composed of numbers."[1] The Pythagoreans taught what is affirmed to-day by every chemist, physicist and astronomer. Modern science not only defines matter by numbers; it actually identifies the essence of matter with the essence of number. For the physicist, colours and sounds are numbers, rates of vibration. For the chemist, the atom is a number or rather the ratio between the numbers of its positive and negative, electro-magnetic components. For the astronomer, the stars are numbers, illustrating, by their motions and chemical structures, the same mathematical laws which shape and move the atom. What appeared almost as nonsense to Aristotle has become an axiom of science, that "the first principles of mathematics are the first principles of all existing things, and the whole heaven is a musical scale and a number."

It is part of the greatness of Pythagoras that he so clearly formulated the mathematical or quantitative method of describing the processes of Nature; and now, after centuries of mental gestation, the Pythagorean pronouncement, that "numbers are things," has become part of the habitual consciousness of our race. But it is said that every profound statement of Truth has at least seven meanings. How many meanings have we found in that axiom of Pythagoras? Certainly one; probably no more. Through its help we have vastly increased our knowledge of the physical plane and our dominion over the physical elements; and that is about all that it means for us.

It must have meant more for Pythagoras. He sounded the keynote of an Age of Science, but the Science which he foreshadowed, was not a mere description of material things. Although it was founded on the data of physical experience, its purpose was self-knowledge through the revelation that the Self within man and the Self within the Universe are one. Pythagoras was not interested in the study of matter conceived apart from consciousness. Probably, such a study would have appeared to him meaningless, untrue, a betrayal of the Divinity of Nature.

[1] *Metaphysics*, I, 5, 6; XIV, 3.

The Pythagorean teaching was intended to be esoteric, to be entrusted only to "the few." As the heart of the student expanded, drawing his personal consciousness towards harmony and union with the Divine Self, Pythagoras prepared the mind, the centre of self-consciousness, by an instruction designed to attune its activity with the changed aspect of the heart. He accustomed the disciple to think of all things and all events as manifestations of universal force and universal law. The personal life of a man produces scarcely a ripple on the waters of space, but in that personal life is contained the germ of a consciousness both eternal and limitless. The disciple has begun the transformation of a personality. His life is truly in accordance with Nature, for it fulfils, by its growth in Self-consciousness, the purpose for which all life exists,—the transmutation of the non-eternal matter or chaos (*apeiron*) into its Eternal Prototype or Model (*peras*).[2] As discipleship signifies the transition from the elemental to the Divine, so the physical Cosmos symbolizes a universal conversion of unconsciousness into consciousness, of the unformed into the beautiful, of that which is potential into that which actually is.

This doctrine recalls the Secret Doctrine of all ages. However, the Pythagorean method of instruction was unique, being adapted to the mental habits of our Western race. The Oriental finds no great difficulty in the assertion of his essential Divinity. The modern Western mind, on the contrary, must be led to this affirmation by a series of preparatory affirmations. We of the West are far more absorbed in what we experience than in what we are. Therefore, Pythagoras directs us to meditate at first not on our being, but on our experience. If we are in essence divine, so is that which impinges on our senses and causes experience. It will be easier for us to begin to recognize Divinity there, in the world of objective Nature, because we are so interested in that world. All that is needed to convert our interest in externals into a means of liberation and spiritual rebirth, is the awakening of a love of Truth. If we describe Nature honestly, we shall not fail to discern the Divinity of Nature. The intellectual method of Pythagoras was designed to awaken the love of Truth, first, by training the disciple in the rigidly accurate description of the facts of the external world; secondly, by giving some evidence of the beauty and magnitude of those cosmic vistas, which exalt the vision of the true scientist. Pythagoras perfectly reconciled religion and science, for he conceived science as a religious exercise.

Lucian has left the record of a brief dialogue between Pythagoras and an unknown philosopher. "How do you count?" asked Pythagoras. The reply was, "One, two, three, four." "Do you not see?" interrupted Pythagoras. "What you take to be four, that is ten (1 + 2 + 3 + 4 = 10) and a perfect

triangle, and our oath."[3]

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[2] *Peras* is literally the finite as opposed to *apeiron* the infinite. Greek philosophy identified the "finite" with form and consciousness or spirit, and ranked it as superior to the "infinite" which is the formless, the unconscious."

[3] *Auction*, 4, I, 317.

Everyone with a fragment of a mind can count. Counting, enumeration, elementary arithmetic, may be the humblest of mental functions, for we share it with the brutes, but it is also the most trustworthy. Two objects, such as two eggs or two cows, cannot conceivably be anything but two. This is so obvious that we call its truth axiomatic, nor is there any other order of truth with equal axiomatic force, unless it be the interior assurance of one's own being. The Eastern sage rooted his thought in the fact, "I am." The Western teacher testified to the fact that there is an exact correspondence between the enumerative faculty of the mind and the enumerative action of Nature, so that, when we see two cows in a field, we know that there are two, neither less nor more. The only difficulty in grasping the importance of this truth is its very simplicity, which is such that the mind meets no opposition in stating it. Most so-called truths are a blend of opposites. However, there is no conceivable paradox involved in the fact that two cows are two cows. So far as it goes, this is absolute truth.

There is consolation in this thought for all human beings. Whenever we perform the simplest arithmetical operation, we are living a truth, nor does our action differ in essence from the act of enumeration, whereby the Logos, the Cosmic Monad, emanates from itself the three worlds succeeding to its own "silence and darkness," as two, three and four succeed mentally to one. The functions of numbers in the mind are the same as the functions of numbers in Nature.

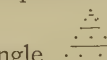
The Lesser Mysteries of the Pythagoreans were taught in the form of mathematics, which was divided, according to Proclus, into four branches, arithmetic, geometry, music and astronomy,—the *quadrivium* of the mediæval Schoolmen. The first three sciences were abstract and universal, providing a key to the understanding of particular phenomena. Astronomy was, on the other hand, an applied science, a concrete and detailed illustration of the general laws revealed by arithmetic, geometry and music. Astronomy was also, as we hope to show, a direct introduction to the science of man.

We have already touched upon the significations hidden in arithmetical calculations, which correspond to cosmic processes. Among these mysterious analogies Pythagoras emphasized that which concerns the number ten, the perfect *decad*. In arithmetic 10 is the number best adapted to complete one gamut of enumeration and to begin another. In Nature we may observe the objective illustration of this numerical law. To take one simple instance, the germination of a seed is just such an enumeration, completing its gamut in the formation of the mature plant and beginning a new gamut in the production of a new seed. On the metaphysical planes, we may expect to find an analogous perfection symbolized in the Arabic notation by 10, for, 1, the unit or vertical line, stands for the Logos, the Divine Principle which transfigures matter, and the 0 is the boundless circle, the potentiality of the matter which is transfigured.[4] The two together—as 10—symbolize the completion of a

[4] "The Arabs had their figures from Hindustan, and never claimed the discovery for themselves." The Hindus seem to have taught decimal "ciphering" esoterically, and "Pythagoras derived his knowledge from India." In common practice, the Greeks denoted numerals by letters of their alphabet (*Secret Doctrine*, I, 361, Ed. 1888; Philolaus, quoted by Stobæus, *Ecl.*, I, 3).

phase of cosmic evolution, the return of the Three Worlds to their parent, in readiness for their reëmergence in a higher phase.

Each number must have a place in the arithmetical series (1, 2, 3, 4. .n), for it contains within itself all lesser numbers and generates a unity, in which it merges its identity, thus forming the next higher number of the series,—as 3 contains 2 and 1 and by the generation of unity produces 4. By analogy, an atom and a Universe are two phases of a single and continuous process. An atom is potentially a Universe; a Universe is the full manifestation or limit (*peras*) of the generative force of an atom.

The generative power of numbers—what Proclus called continuous quantity[5] —was the special study of Pythagorean geometry. Continuous quantity is most clearly revealed in terms of spatial relations, and there is little doubt that Pythagoras invented or introduced from Egypt a form of the abacus, on which geometrical figures were designed by dots or pebbles. In this way, he identified number with form, and was able to form various groups of numbers having specific generative powers. For example, if we arrange the pebbles of the abacus in a continuous series we shall inevitably construct a triangle  ; the succession of odd numbers will form a square ; and the even numbers, often described as evil, because they are indeterminate, will produce an oblong figure of changing relative dimensions . If we glance back at the successive sums produced by these series, we shall find in the case of the triangle 3, 6 and 10; in the square 4 and 9; in the oblong 6 and 12. This will explain the designations, sometimes given to these numbers as respectively triangular, square and oblong. To take another instance of continuous quantity as the cause of form, the series 1, 2, 3, 4 may be expressed as the point (1)., producing the line , the line (2) producing the triangle or plane the triangle (3) producing the tetrahedron or solid (4).[6] Thus the series (1, 2, 3, 4) which was so important in arithmetic, derives an added significance in geometry, since it engenders the three dimensions of physical space and completes objectively the gamut or decad of a whole phase of existence. We may now dimly perceive why Pythagoras spoke of ten as being "a perfect triangle and our oath." Ten is a triangular number and its form was known as The Holy Tetraktys.[7]

Pythagoras is generally regarded as the first to place the study of geometry on a scientific basis, and many of Euclid's propositions are attributed to

[5] *In primum Euclidis elementorum librum commentarii*, p. 97, quoted in the excellent article on *Pythagorean Geometry* by G. J. Allman (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th Ed.).

[6] *Secret Doctrine*, I, 616.

[7] A derivative of the Greek word for four (*tessares* or *tettares*).

him or to his disciples. But one may suggest that Pythagorean geometry was at once more dynamic and more metaphysical than the geometry of Euclid and the Alexandrians. The Universe is a "self-moving essence"—to use Aristotle's expression—and all forms contained within the Universe are transitional, creations of a past and creators of a future; there can be no such thing as a static existence. And the same is true of human thought; no idea can exist save as a conclusion and a premise of other ideas. Logic, like geometry, is really a study of dynamics.

Arithmetic reveals the world as a plenum containing an infinity of beings, which are manifested as things and defined as numbers. Geometry describes a process within the plenum which enforces upon things or numbers a continuous change of "unit value." Each number, though individually distinct from every other number, is at the same time all the other numbers, since it already contains these within itself—as 4 contains 3—or it will generate and pass into them—as 4 generates and passes into 5. Arithmetic and geometry, as Pythagoras conceived them, were metaphysical expressions containing the essence of the later, more diffuse, if more intelligible doctrines of Plato.[8]

There is another property of numbers which is especially revealed by music, the study of harmony or proportion. Proclus described music as that science which treats of the relations between numerals. No number can be conceived as existing only in itself, for it cannot exist apart from the series by which it is generated and which it helps to generate. But its existence as a creative factor is due to the harmonic order of its parts, that is, of the lower numbers of the series which have been merged in its nature. By virtue of this interior harmony it has the power to merge its own nature into the still more perfect nature of the succeeding number which it generates.

This abstruse theory may become clearer, if we consider the specific contribution of Pythagoras to the science of music. He is said to have invented the eight-stringed lyre, as the result of the following experiment, which he may have learned in the Schools of Chaldæa.[9] By actual measurement he showed that the pitch of any tone of the lyre is determined—all other things being equal—by the length of the string sounding the tone. He was then able to demonstrate that the tones, which are related as the three descending concordant intervals of the Greek scale, are sounded by strings, which are respectively equal in length to $\frac{4}{3}$, $\frac{3}{2}$, and $\frac{2}{1}$ the length of the shortest string of the lyre. If we arrange the length of the four strings in an integral relation, we shall have the proportion, 6:8::9:12, including the tonic, the fourth, the fifth and the octave.[10] This is the classical formula of a perfect proportion containing within itself an arithmetical mean, 9; and a harmonic mean, 8. It possessed an added significance for the Pythagorean, because it was the proportional counterpart of the Tetraktys ∴ Descending from the apex,

[8] *Isis Unveiled*, I, 9.
[9] Iamblichus: *On the Arithmetic of Nicomachus*, p. 168.
[10] Philo: *Life of Moses;* II, 115; Armand Delatte: *Etudes sur la littérature pythagoricienne*, p. 257–258.

which is here equivalent to a given pitch, one hears in ascending succession, within the sound, the octave, 1:2, the fifth, 2:3, and the fourth, 3:4, these being the first three harmonics of the fundamental tone.

Let us try to interpret one of the numerical mysteries contained within this "harmonic proportion." The decad signifies the completion of a phase of being and the power of generating a new phase. One attribute of the decad is perfection of form, made possible by the equilibrium or harmony of its component elements. Greek art, Greek ethics, Greek religion—while they lasted—gave a living expression to this doctrine of the Golden Mean, the essence of all beauty. The Pythagorean geometricians, in their dynamic language, called the Tetraktys "the fount and source of Eternal Nature."

Pythagoras is said to have used the language of mathematics to express the first principles of things, because those principles seem so abstract, when represented intellectually, that words cannot be found to denote them.[11] Modern science has so far recognized the justice of this remark that it really gives a Pythagorean definition to the *prima materia* which it studies. The ultimate substance of physical things is conceived sometimes as an aggregate of numbers, sometimes as a *codex* of mathematical laws. Scientists do not know what it is in itself, and most of them deny that such knowledge is possible.

Pythagoras would surely have agreed that intellectual knowledge of the essence of anything is unattainable. But if one cannot know it intellectually, one can know it—in another and more profound sense—by making it an actual part of one's consciousness. "Man, know thyself,"—that is, be thyself. The students of the second degree in the Pythagorean Order were called mathematicians (*mathematikoi*, those who are disposed to learn). In the third degree, we may imagine, were found those who were disposed to be.

It is possible that astronomy was the special study of the disciples of the third degree. Arithmetic, geometry and music reveal only the broad principles on which all existence is based; but astronomy is concerned with the concrete manifestation of those principles in the particular phase of macrocosmic life, with which we are brought into direct physical, psychic and spiritual contact. The human soul is a "number moving itself," a dynamic microcosm, one of the countless self-moved "numbers," whose procession from perfection to perfection leads at last to union with the number of the macrocosm; and as the macrocosm contains within itself the essence of all microcosmic life, we may expect to find a correspondence of nature between a planet and the atoms of which it is composed, between the science of the stars and the science of man. No one can really seek knowledge from the Heavens, without thereby illumining the mysteries of personal human life.

The detailed astronomical teaching of Pythagoras is not available, and we must rely upon the statements of later philosophers and scholars, who probably had access to some of the esoteric documents of the Pythagoreans. There is no evidence that he discussed what may lie beyond our solar system. It is

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[11] Porphyry: *Life of Pythagoras*, 48.

said that he corrected the existing calculations of the length of the year, and various discoveries were attributed to him or to his disciples by ancient writers, —that Venus is both the morning and the evening star, that the Moon shines by reflected light, that the Earth is a sphere freely suspended in space. He seems to have revealed the natural causes of eclipses and to have explained changes of season by the obliquity of the ecliptic.[12] H. P. B. states categorically that Pythagoras described the Earth and the other planets as revolving around the Sun.[13] It is apparently impossible to confirm this statement by any available ancient source. The most famous exponent of the heliocentric theory in antiquity was Aristarchus of Samos (281 B.C.), whose assertion of the central position of the Sun was so uncompromising that he was charged with heresy, for "overthrowing the altar of the Earth."[14] Aristarchus' speculations had been foreshadowed by Heraclides of Pontus, by Ecphantus, notably by Hicetas of Syracuse (*cir.* 500 B.C.), who had probably been a member of the original Pythagorean Order.[15] The work of Hicetas, though unknown in detail, is of special interest, because it inspired Copernicus who wrote, in his letter to Pope Paul III: "I first discovered in Cicero,[16] how Hicetas stated that the Earth moved (*terram moveri*). From that time I began to reflect upon the mobility of the Earth."

Probably the heliocentric doctrine was part of the Mystery-teaching, and Pythagoras was—as in other instances—a revealer, rather than an originator. The misunderstandings of later uninitiated students were caused, perhaps, by the symbolical form of all the Pythagorean teaching which was intended for disciples. But Aristotle has suggested the way in which the Pythagoreans demonstrated the rotation and revolution of the Earth, by criticizing them for believing in these and other "absurdities" because of their mathematical appropriateness.[17] Has not Henri Poincaré said that the modern astronomer believes in the heliocentric doctrine, not because it has been definitely proved, but because it is clearer, simpler, more beautiful as a mathematical exposition of the facts than is the geocentric system? The more beautiful is the more true.

Pythagoras taught that the planets are separated from one another by distances, which, compared numerically, stand in a proportion that is again reflected in the ratios between the velocities of the planets. This proportion constituted the harmony of the spheres, a divine music, of which all earthly music is an imitation or—as Plato would have said—a reminiscence. As the sound of a forge is ever present to the consciousness of the smith, but he does not heed it, so man does not notice the divine sound which encompasses him. Only the sage can hear the music of the spheres, doubtless because the sage is no longer merely encompassed by it: he has drawn its essence into his nature; he hears the song of life, because that song is—to an ever-increasing degree—himself.

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[12] A. E. Chaignet: *Pythagore et la philosophie pythagoricienne*, II, 140–156.
[13] *Secret Doctrine*, I, 117.
[14] Plutarch: *On the Apparent Face in the Orb of the Moon.*
[15] Chaignet: *op. cit.*, II, 143. [16] *Acad.*, IV, 32.
[17] "The Pythagoreans based their convictions not upon facts, but upon reasons." *De Coelo*, II, 13.

It is obvious that at this point we have crossed the boundary between astronomy and astrology. Students of Pythagoras are easily confused because it is often difficult to decide on which side of the line one stands. This is especially true as regards the fragments of Pythagorean teaching preserved by Philolaus, an older contemporary of Plato.[18] According to Philolaus, the Sun is a vitrescent orb, revolving with the Earth, Moon and planets, about a Central Fire, known variously as Hestia (Vesta), the Tower of Zeus, the Measure of Nature, the Altar. The Sun was said to reflect and to distribute the light of the Central Fire, tempering its radiant energy to the receptive power of the Earth, so that the Sun, in this system, is not the centre but the heart.

In the opinion of the present author, this Hestia-centric system, as we may call it—was astrological, in the sense that the Eastern conception of the Earth's chain of globes is astrological. The following interpretation is suggested.

It has been said that we do not see the real Sun, but only its reflection or veil.[19] Perhaps, one meaning of that statement is that we are able to perceive that part of the solar radiance which may be assimilated or mirrored by the Earth's atmosphere. For example, it is known that our physical senses respond to some vibrations and not to others, because the nerves are like the strings of a musical instrument, being attuned to a limited range of wavelengths. The Sun, the planets, the stars have their own individual existence beyond the Earth's sphere. We see their shining orbs in the sky, but what is it that we see? Surely only those phases of their being, to which certain vibratory responses are made by the Earth. The Earth is a miniature Cosmos, having its distinctive nature or tone, which is attuned to all other natures in the Universe, and these other natures are contained within the Earth's sphere somewhat as an harmonic of a sound is contained within the sound itself, though the vibration of the harmonic becomes audible only when it is brought in contact with the string which sounds the harmonic as its fundamental tone. Our physical senses are too feeble to grasp more than a fragment of the Cosmic symphony. As Eugenius Philalethes said, no man has yet seen the true form of the Earth. When Pythagoras was dying, he bade his disciples to touch the monochord, reminding them that the whole science of music was contained potentially within the compass of its single string.

In the system of Philolaus, the planetary system has the following order: Hestia, the Antichthon or Anti-Earth—which we cannot see because we are turned away from it—the Earth, the Moon, Mercury, Venus, the Sun, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn and finally Olympus, which is the firmament, the sphere of the fixed stars. According to the interpretation which we have ventured to offer, these heavenly bodies signify zones of the Earth's substance, which correspond in vibration to the real Sun, Moon, etc. The order of the zones differs from the order of their prototypes, because it is composed according to the mode or key of the Earth. Thus, the arrangements of the notes of a musical scale must depend upon the note with which it commences and—in the modern diatonic

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[18] Chaignet: *op. cit.*, I, 213–254.

[19] *Secret Doctrine*, I, 540, seq.

scale—upon the major or minor mode which determines the degrees of the intervals.[20]

Hestia seems to be the symbol of the Central Spiritual Sun, a ray or monad of which is present, as the spark of reality, at the centre of every atom, planet or solar system. When the Fire of Hestia mingles with the undifferentiated matter of Olympus, the zones or elements are born and, with the creation of the elements, begins the history of the Earth. When the union of Fire and matter has been perfected, the "true form of the Earth" becomes visible. The decad appears, in the conjunction of the Monad (1) and the Sphere (0).

But Hestia is present not only as the positive nucleus or *proton* of the Earth. It is one with the principle of existence everywhere; and its activity is initiated by the "cycles of the stars" as these are recorded in the substance of Olympus. Olympus is sometimes called the fifth element or Ether, and is identified with *Kronos*, the Power of the Cycle or Time. It contains the essence of the material elements, as the ether of modern science is conceived to be the source of all atomic energies. The substance of Olympus is akin to that of the stars, which lend to it their radiance. There is a continuous interchange of force between Olympus and the Infinite. The Earth breathes, inhaling and exhaling space.[21]

Astronomy reveals the Law of Correspondence which governs the procession of beings in the Cosmos, wherein there is no division of qualities, for each being contains the power of manifesting, ultimately and completely, every quality which can be manifested, as every acorn is potentially a perfect oak. Man is one of those beings destined to become divine. In studying the nature of the Heavens, he contemplates his own destiny and sees, in objective form, the operation of Principles, which are at work, even now, in the moulding of his consciousness.

One does not, however, study consciousness in the same way that one studies material bodies, the vestures of consciousness. To know what a particular state of consciousness is like, one must be conscious in that state; imagine trying to explain the taste of an orange to someone born without a sense of taste. Pythagorean astronomy means much or little to the student, according to the degree in which he can recognize in his consciousness the counterparts of celestial laws. Presumably, Pythagoras taught astronomy to his disciples, partly at least because it enabled them to become aware of their own progress. The progress itself had come as an inevitable result of obedience to the rules of the Order; astronomy explained its rationale and prepared the way for further progress by broadening and deepening the imagination.

An instance may be given from the science of medicine. Plato gave a Pythagorean definition of the Soul or principle of life as a harmony,[22] that is,

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[20] H. P. B. refers to the "Seven powers of terrestrial and sublunary nature, as well as the seven great Forces of the Universe, proceeding and evolving in seven tones, which are the seven notes of the musical scale." *Secret Doctrine*, II, 602. The exoteric Ptolemaic system may have arisen through the confusion of the sublunary with the Universal.

[21] Plutarch: *Placita philosophorum*, II, 9.

[22] *Phædo*, 85e.

as the mean reconciling a "pair of opposites." Health is then, the condition of consciousness, upon any plane, in which no organ or faculty functions excessively or defectively. To take a crude example, the animal in a state of nature, eats to satisfy hunger and, at other times, will not touch food however tempting. There is a mean between eating and not eating, a mean present in the instinct or proper nature of the animal itself. Man, considered as an animal, is unhealthy, because he does not obey the mean. He eats and refrains from eating, without reference to the genuine demands of his body. Therefore, he sounds a discord. Medicine was a means of restoring harmony, prescribing drugs for the sick body, music to still the passions and emotions, and philosophy to bring into appropriate exercise the higher faculties of the mind.

It was a Pythagorean teaching that the soul is in the body, as in a prison.[23] The final objective is liberation, but between the present state of man and the goal of his evolution extend many gamuts of existence, as between 1 and 100 there are ten series, each of ten numbers. These gamuts may be described as a series of lives on earth, for how can man escape the universal law which demands that each creature must proceed by degrees towards perfection, omitting no intermediate stage,—in the same way that we cannot properly omit one number from an enumeration? In the words of Philolaus the soul is joined to the body by the virtue of number and reciprocal correspondence.[24]

The doctrines of Reincarnation and Karma were thus brought to the attention of the West at the dawn of its modern history. Pythagoras is said to have remembered his past lives, through the favour of Hermes. In particular, he recalled his incarnation as the Trojan hero, Euphorbus, whose shield hung in a temple of Juno at Mycenæ.[25]

The present author feels wholly incompetent to express even an opinion as to the more subtile correspondence between the macrocosm and man. The teaching of Pythagoras, however, has the splendid power of appealing to the will. Therefore, one may propose certain questions, which the reader is invited to answer, though it is probable that there exists for them no answer in words, since their key is to be found in consciousness, in the direction and intensity of the will.

What bearing has the doctrine of the Harmony of the Spheres upon sacred friendship and upon the brotherhood of man? To what principle in man does Hestia, the Universal Fire, correspond? Is the need for personal purification justified by the law that the Earth participates in the Universal Order, because the Earth is itself the expression of a perfect interior order and proportion? Does the relation of the Lodge to humanity or of a Master to a disciple resemble the relation of the Stars or of the Sun to the sphere of the Earth?

S. L.

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[23] Plato: *Gorgias*, 493a. [24] Chaignet: *op. cit.*, II, 187.
[25] Iamblichus: *Life of Pythagoras*, XIV, Diogenes Laertius, VIII, 4.

LODGE DIALOGUES

V

M. T. is tall and slender; his dark eyes are rather large for his oval face. He looks the scholar and the ascetic, but the poet and the dreamer are there also. He is very erect, and one of his marked characteristics is the stately carriage of his head. He is very quiet; there is a certain hush about him, like that which comes at sunset on a summer evening. He had been away from home a long, weary while, and after the din and confusion of those foreign lands, how sweet the peace and coolness of the garden! We who noticed his thinness and accentuated pallor, and the heavy circles about his eyes, saw also what it had done for him,—how it had developed and matured him. He paced up and down the familiar paths among the lilies, book in hand as always, though not reading.

The Littlest One espied him. "Oh, M. T.!" he cried, "may I come?" but joined him without waiting for the assured invitation, fitting his impetuous steps into his brother's even pace, and confidently taking his hand.

Then the Littlest One began explaining things in his eager, musical voice. The Big Brother being absent, as so often of late, he seized upon this coveted chance to pour himself out to the next one, this Still Brother, whose eyes are wells of reflection, and his heart a deep cistern of clear, unbroken contemplation. It was not half so satisfactory, for there was less response. At the same time one could not disregard the advantages of freedom from interruption or the apprehension of possible teasing.

"There are some things I cannot understand," he went on, "I think and think, as Big Brother tells me to do, but still I cannot understand." The Still One eyed him gently; their ways of thinking were quite different. The Littlest One was quick: "O you are not like me,—never in a hurry; without moving you go,"—he laughed gaily; "Big Brother says because you are French—the French of yesterday and of to-morrow—that is one of the things I do not understand." The Still One smiled, content as ever not to explain himself.

"Where is the Big Brother now?" "In the Snows with the Father, at the Great Meeting," was the elder's answer. "And next year you go?" "Yes, next year." "And then some day I shall go," the child added softly, a note of reverence in his tone at the thought of that wonderful event.

"I want to explain about the Voice of the Silence;"—he hurried back to the thought possessing him, "I am trying now to catch it. I think and think about it. I do not see why I cannot hear it. I have been lying out in the long grass where it was so still; not even a bird. The light was sleeping in the shadows under the trees; it rocked on the tassels over my head. I lay there

a long, long while, many times, listening, but I could not hear it. There were little rustles I heard; now and again the wind came and whispered a secret; some insects talked, too, in low tones; but that was all I heard, though I never stopped one moment listening. Once I went down, far down into the valley, where the great Buddha sits in the temple. There is much silence there. You know how much, when the little bells ring and touch it with their light fingers. Right after the bells, I was sure each time the Voice of the Silence would come, but I never heard it. Then at night, under the stars, where Simiolchum points its finger up into the sky, and there is no sound at all except, deep down, you can hear the mountains breathing. Big Brother says they are praying, while the angels carry their tapers in procession. Tell me, M. T., why do I never hear the Voice of the Silence, however hard I try?"

They took a turning in the path, and came upon a group of older Chêlas. To his vast delight they made the child welcome and sat him in their midst and questioned him. M. T. had gone, wisely leading his little brother where his answer might be found as it were best to give it to him. There was a tender protection in their attitude, mingled with deference,—a beautifully blended sense of his youth, with recognition of his dignity.

"What are you thinking of these days, Little Brother, while the Big Brother is so much and so far away?" they asked him. A shade passed over the sweet, transparent face, as clouds are reflected in clear water. Then the sunshine touched it again. "Haru is with me and cares for me," he said; "now M. T. is back again, and I have so much to think about. I am trying to catch the Voice of the Silence"—and he repeated, rejoicing in his opportunity, all he had just been saying.

In the gathering twilight the older Chêlas listened, the flute-like modulations of the voice suggesting in its own undertones the very thing the Littlest One was seeking. Perhaps some echo of the feeling he stirred, impressed the boy himself, for when he had finished his tale he did not break the pause that followed with further speech, but remained silent, not an usual proceeding.

Then one of the Chêlas said: "In your heart is the Voice of the Silence, O questioning child. In the outer world, only its echoes are sounding. 'Seek the way by retreating within,' comes *first*, in the little book you have learned by heart. 'Seek the way by advancing boldly without,' comes *second*. Within our hearts lies the power of hearing these things which belong to the inner world. There is where we must listen,—not out, but in. Until we can hear it there, we can hear it nowhere else. Hearing it there, we gain the power to hear it elsewhere; for the inner world, in truth, is the only world there is. When we find it, we must cultivate it. It is easy to lose; so we must never forget. Like a blind man learning to see, we must learn to understand what we are hearing, so that we shall not make false pictures. Otherwise we shall know less than if we had never heard at all."

When M. T. came a little later, he led the happy, sleepy child away.

M.

THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

XV

St. Teresa (*Continued*)

ST. TERESA'S father died in 1544. In her *Life*, she passes almost immediately from that date to an incident in the year 1555 which led her finally to turn to a more strict life than the other nuns. The years intervening between 1544 and 1555 formed a part of the twenty year "strife and contention which arose out of many attempts to reconcile God and the world." "When I was in the midst of the pleasures of the world, the remembrance of what I owed to God made me sad; and when I was praying to God my worldly affections disturbed me. This is so painful a struggle, that I know not how I could have borne it for a month, let alone for so many years. Nevertheless, I can trace distinctly the great mercy of our Lord to me, while thus immersed in the world, in that I had still the courage to pray. I say courage, because I know of nothing in the whole world which requires greater courage than plotting treason against the King, knowing that He knows it, and yet never withdrawing from His presence; for, granting that we are always in the presence of God, yet it seems to me that those who pray are in His presence in a very different sense: for they, as it were, see that He is looking upon them; while others may be for days together without even once recollecting that God sees them." [8]

Remembering her struggle, prolonged through twenty years, no mortal who is aiming for the "path" ought ever to be discouraged. Even for her, twenty years were necessary to make one-pointed her divided purpose; up to her forty-first year, even she wavered. Ought any one therefore to be surprised at the obstinacy of his lower nature? Her example, however, may have this element of danger in it; a man may see in her long conflict excuse for prolonging his neutrality, instead of bringing his warfare to decisive action. Teresa did win, splendidly, and took a courageous stand on God's side; while some might be content to oscillate for ever between God and the world.

The incident in 1555 that brought her long warfare to a successful termination was a picture displayed at the Incarnation for a special holy day. "It was a representation of Christ most grievously wounded; and so devotional, that the very sight of it, when I saw it, moved me,—so well did it show forth that which He suffered for us. So keenly did I feel the evil return I had made for those wounds, that I thought my heart was breaking. I threw myself on the ground beside it, my tears flowing plenteously, and implored Him to strengthen me once for all, so that I might never offend Him any more." [9]

[8] *Life*, p. 47.

[9] *Life*, p. 53.

The picture rekindled her efforts to meditate, and, referring to this period, she writes: "This was my method of prayer: I contrived to picture Christ as within me; and I used to find myself the better for thinking of those mysteries of His life during which He was most lonely. It seemed to me that the being alone and afflicted, like a person in trouble, must needs permit me to come near unto Him."[10] The victorious decision she had made, yielded rich fruit in her meditations, and also deepened her intimacy with the Master, beyond the degree of which the nuns around her spoke. There were, however, some notorious women in Madrid whose alleged visions were a common topic of conversation. To her horror, Teresa discovered that in her own experience there were points which appeared to resemble some of the things related by them. Truthful, conscientious, humble, and self-accusing, Teresa was now plunged in the deepest distress; was she like those evil women, she asked herself. In books, she had read that such relations as the Master had now formed with her He gave to people of consecrated lives, whereas she called herself an ungrateful sinner. What then was she to infer—that she was being misled by a devil (she deserved no better, in her own esteem) as those mediumistic women of Madrid had been? In her distress, she went to a "good" man of Avila,—a man who heard Mass and sermons regularly, and who regularly said his prayers,—and asked him, together with his parish priest, to advise her. (It is sufficient comment upon the Incarnation that there was no one there with whom she could talk.) She told them humbly of her life, she called herself a hardened sinner who for twenty years had lived in deliberate sin, and then she told of the richness of her meditations, her spiritual intimacy with Christ. Her advisers accepted literally the words about her "sins," told her "these things were inconsistent one with another," as such intimacies were given to people who had made great progress and led holy lives, and, in sincere alarm (the "good" man was a kinsman), they expressed their fear that he, with whom she was in such relations, was not Christ but the devil. Frightened by their opinion, which she had feared while hoping against it, she lent to her two advisers a book that had helped her in her meditations, a Franciscan manual, entitled the *Ascent of the Mount*, in which experiences like her own were clearly described, and were attributed to Christ as his direct work. The manual did not change the opinion of her advisers nor alleviate their distress over her condition; they referred her to a priest of the Society of Jesus who had just come to Avila, as one more skilled in matters of religion than they, and in terror, she prepared for this new ordeal, writing out fully the "evil" of her life so that her judge might not condemn her for concealing it. The Jesuit father understood in a measure; he conducted her through Ignatius's *Spiritual Exercises*, laughed at the nonsense about the devil, bade her continue the healthful and profitable practice of meditation, taking as topics the mysteries of the Passion and our Lord's Divine Humanity; but he also directed her to *resist* the loving advances made

[10] *Life*, p. 54.

to her by the Master. This counsel relieved and encouraged her. Two months later, another Jesuit came to Avila, St. Francis Borgia, formerly Duke of Gandia; he too encouraged Teresa by telling her she was led by Christ, and he removed the restriction placed upon her by the former Jesuit, bidding her now to welcome any favour Christ might show her.

The following year is memorable—1558, when she was forty-three years old—in that she then for the first time heard the Master's voice. Contrary to her priest's opinion, she still insisted that conversation with certain very intimate friends of whom she was fond, could not harm her. The priest bade her make it a matter of meditation, repeating to herself the hymn, "Come, Holy Ghost, Creator blest." She did so, saying to Christ that she wished to please him in all things. Suddenly, he replied: "I will not have thee converse with men, but with angels." [11]

Her comment upon the words which the Master spoke to her, from time to time, during the rest of her life, is illuminating. "The words are very distinctly formed; but by the bodily ear they are not heard. They are, however, much more clearly understood than they would be if they were heard by the ear. It is impossible not to understand them, whatever resistance we may offer. When we wish not to hear any thing in this world, we can stop our ears, or give our attention to something else: so that, even if we do hear, at least we can refuse to understand. . . . But, when our Lord speaks, it is at once word and work; and though the words may not be meant to stir up our devotion, but are rather words of reproof, they dispose a soul at once, strengthen it, make it tender, give it light, console and calm it; and if it should be in dryness, or in trouble and uneasiness, all is removed, as if by the action of a hand, and even better; for it seems as if our Lord would have the soul understand that He is all-powerful, and that His words are deeds." [12] She adds, as to the Master's words: "They instruct us without loss of time, and we understand matters which seem to require a month on our part to arrange." [13]

It may be of benefit to bring together a few of the sentences that at different times were spoken to her by the Master, since some readers may find that they are marked by traits common to New Testament utterances. Once, when she was grieving that other persons, more holy than she, knew nothing of His actual Presence, He replied: "Serve thou Me, and meddle not with this." [14] When some of her devotional books were taken from her (people who suspected her, tried to hinder her communion with the Master by denying her books, and time for solitude), and she was grieving, the Master said: "Be not troubled; I will give thee a living book." [15] Much later, when she began to establish her monasteries, people told her she was acting contrary to St. Paul's explicit directions, for he had spoken quite clearly as to what women should and should not do. Teresa, always ready to accuse herself of wrong-doing, became very distrustful of her purpose, whereupon the Master said: "Tell

[11] *Life*, p. 172. [12] *Life*, p. 173, ff. [13] *Life*, p. 177.
[14] *Life*, p. 125. [15] *Life*, p. 187.

them they are not to follow one part of Scripture by itself, without looking to the other parts also; perhaps, if they could, they would like to tie My hands." [16]

Teresa maintained strict silence about her inner experiences, except to her spiritual advisers, and it was their indiscretion which roused suspicion and occasioned harsh judgments of her. The two Jesuits who had given sympathy and encouragement, were only visitors,—they did not live in Avila. Other priests and laymen whom she consulted, understood her less, and some of them, disturbed over her state, and likewise not wishing to be in any degree implicated in her possible heresy and witchcraft, took counsel of friends, and thus were responsible for making her experiences a common topic of gossip. The identity of her "teacher" was gravely suspected (was he God or devil?), and she was directed to pray that he would discontinue his visits and oral comments, and would guide her by some other method. For two years she did so petition, but vainly, for he only increased his kindness to her, which she thus narrates: "I was in prayer one day, when I saw Christ close by me, or, to speak more correctly, felt him; for I saw nothing with the eyes of the body, nothing with the eyes of the soul. He seemed to me to be close beside me; and I saw, too, as I believe, that it was he who was speaking to me. As I was utterly ignorant that such a vision was possible, I was extremely afraid at first, and did nothing but weep; however, when he spoke to me but one word to reassure me, I recovered myself, and was, as usual, calm and comforted, without any fear whatever. Jesus Christ seemed to be by my side continually; . . . I saw no form; but I had a most distinct feeling that he was always on my right hand, a witness of all I did. . . . I went at once to my confessor, in great distress, to tell him of it. He asked in what form I saw our Lord. I told him I saw no form. He then said: 'How did you know that it was Christ?' I replied, that I did not know how I knew it; but I could not help knowing that he was close beside me,—that I saw him distinctly, and felt his presence. . . . My confessor next asked me, who told me it was Jesus Christ. I replied, that he often told me so himself; but, even before he told me so, there was an impression on my understanding that it was he; and before this he used to tell me so, and I saw him not. If a person whom I had never seen, but of whom I had heard, came to speak to me, and I were blind or in the dark, and told me who he was, I should believe him; but I could not so confidently affirm that he was that person, as I might do if I had seen him. But in this vision I could do so, because so clear a knowledge is impressed on the soul that all doubt seems impossible, though he is not seen. Our Lord wills that this knowledge be so graven on the understanding, that we can no more question his presence than we can question that which we see with our eyes: not so much even; for very often there arises a suspicion that we have imagined things we think we see; but here, though there may be a suspicion in the first instant, there remains a certainty so great, that the doubt has no force whatever." [17]

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[16] *Relations* III, par. 10.

[17] *Life*, p. 189 ff.

Summing up this new consciousness of her Master, she writes that in the earlier stages, "certain inflowings of the Godhead are present; but in [this] vision, the Sacred Humanity also, together with them, is pleased to be our visible companion." [18] It was the body of the resurrection in which he manifested himself to her, she writes, suffused with brilliant but soft light. She saw him thus, frequently, for two years and a half, and very much desired to see the colour of his eyes, but never succeeded, since she lost sight of him whenever she tried to meet his look. Once he took the cross of her rosary, and when he handed it back, the wood was changed to precious stones; he told her she should henceforth always see the stones though other people would see merely the wood.

The more intimate Teresa's experience became, the greater became the suspicions and alarm of the priests and advisers whom she consulted; they were convinced that the devil had made her his victim; consequently they now ordered her to repulse her Visitant and treat Him with contempt. Always obedient to her advisers, Teresa endeavoured to carry out their behests, but if she succeeded in manifesting contempt, it did not have the result they had hoped for.

The next important date is 1560, when plans were broached for establishing a convent that should not be connected with the Incarnation, and in which the primitive, austere rule of the Carmelites might be observed. At first, the plans moved smoothly and it appeared likely that the new convent would soon be a fact.[19] Her divine Master commanded and encouraged the undertaking, promising Teresa true success; and the official head of the Carmelite convents in that district of Spain, gave his permission for the building. Legal papers conveying this house were about to be signed, when the tide turned, and the well laid plans were wrecked. The opposition of the nuns of the Incarnation, and of the Avila townspeople, seemed the obvious cause of failure, but later, when new plans had been carried through to success, Teresa attributed the initial failure to the Master's disapproval of her arrangement for revenue, as she said he wished the convent founded without endowment.

The hostility of the nuns was to have been expected, and Teresa writes thus of them: "I was now very much disliked throughout the whole monastery, because I wished to found another with stricter enclosure. It was said I insulted my sisters; that I could serve God among them as well as elsewhere, for there were many among them much better than I; that I did not love the house, and that it would have been better if I had procured greater resources for it than for another. Some said I ought to be put in prison; others—but they were not many—defended me in some degree. I saw well enough that they were for the most part right, and now and then I made excuses for myself, though, as I could not tell them the chief reason, which was the commandment of our Lord, I knew not what to do, and so was silent." [20] The townspeople in their opposition were moved, perhaps, by civic pride; to

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[18] *Life*, p. 191. [19] *Letters*, Vol. I, p. 3, ff. [20] *Life*, p. 249.

them, Teresa was a kind of witch, and they did not want her to make Avila notorious.

It is interesting to observe the steps by which she accomplished the "impossible" and won a victory over complete opposition. For several months she did nothing; then, at the recommendation of a friendly Dominican adviser, she took the matter again in hand, though secretly. That she had any chance whatever of success lay in the fact that even in the Roman Catholic Church, with its closely-knit organization, there may be an over-lapping of authority. The Dominican, with his experience of authority and its limits, perceived a slight chance of success, and urged her to take it, since he believed her commission was divinely inspired. The first and most important step toward establishing the convent was to obtain ecclesiastical sanction for it, and her Dominican adviser knew that the Bishop of Avila might be (if he cared to) a loophole of escape from the impasse. While the Carmelite official had prohibited the convent, that prohibition held valid only within Carmelite jurisdiction, and was in no degree whatever binding upon a Bishop who, with a license easily obtainable from Rome, could give sanction to a new convent as one of the religious "works" of his diocese. The Dominican knew, and the Bishop appears to have known just as clearly, that such a sanction, which in fact invalidated the Carmelite prohibition, was contrary to no legal or ecclesiastical or moral law. True, a foreboding mind might have asked of what benefit it would be for Teresa to start a new convent seeing that, as a Carmelite, she would not herself be permitted to live there, in view of her superior's ruling; fortunately, Teresa's was not a foreboding mind—she did not exact that she should cross all her bridges in advance, or she would never have taken a single step. It was sufficient for her, that her director declared there was a chance of getting the convent started; she would not risk delay, in the hope that some other plan might later be found that would give her the desired residence within the walls of the new house. The way which the Dominican pointed out was this,—she could build and present to the Bishop of Avila (if he would accept) a convent for which the Carmelite officials would not give her their permission—and this without violating any law of state, church or conscience.

The next step was to approach the Bishop. He appears not to have resided in Avila, but at a distance, and to have taken no interest in the quarrels and prejudices of the inhabitants; he had heard of Teresa from friendly priests, and judged her to be a truly religious woman; further, he was himself a thoroughly good man and commanded general respect. He was not unsympathetic to the scheme, when it was presented to him, but hesitated at the provision of "no endowment," though when it became apparent that Teresa and her friends were capable managers (one friend undertook to obtain the necessary license from Rome), and were not likely to impose financial or any other heavy responsibility upon him, he gave cheerful consent. The first step was thus accomplished, and the next step was to plan for a house,—all to be done in secret on account of the general hostility. Prudence pointed to Teresa's

sister (her younger sister, Juana, not the half-sister, Maria) as a screen for the real undertaking, and the sister gladly co-operated, coming with her husband and family from their country village, as if to establish a domicile of their own in Avila. It was this sister's boy who was supposed to have been killed by a falling wall of the new building, and when, in an agony of grief for that sympathetic sister, Teresa took the dead body in her arms and implored the Master to restore life—the boy revived. Notwithstanding all the precautions, the comments made upon Juana's house showed that suspicion was not dead. It may be that some individuals communicated their suspicions to the Carmelite superior, for he ordered Teresa to go to Toledo, seventy-five miles distant from Avila, on an errand of mercy which detained her there six months. Difficulties in connection with the new house never ended, but as fast as they arose she met and solved them. The house was at last roofed and habitable, and Juana's family could "camp" there; the next problem was to bring Teresa herself under the roof, for supervising the final details which no one else could direct. At this point, according to Juana's husband, Providence itself stepped in and cut the knot: Juana was summoned to the country for business of her own, and scarcely had she departed from Avila, when her husband fell desperately ill; he seems to have glimpsed the divine strategy, for he averred that he had been "made" ill, meaning, of course made ill by Providence (it was not a feigned illness). In this emergency, the prioress of the Incarnation felt that common philanthropy required Teresa to minister to the forlorn family; so she was sent by her own prioress to the spot where her presence was needed for many other things besides ordinary household duties.

When all preparations were ended, the convent was dedicated to St. Joseph on August 24th, 1562; Mass was said in the small oratory with a congregation of ten persons, and Teresa gave to four novices who were to dwell there, the primitive habit of the Carmelites, a distinctive feature of which was the sandal worn upon a bare foot.[21] Teresa herself, as a nun resident at the Incarnation, could make no change in her own.

When Avila awoke to what had been done in broad daylight, under its very eyes, a storm of rage broke.

C. C. Clark.

[21] This feature of the habit gives the name to St. Teresa's branch of the Carmelites—"discalced Carmelites" (from the Latin, *discalceatus*, which goes back to the word *calx*, meaning heel).

(To be continued)

THE CROWN OF HUMAN LIFE

HUMAN life is not thought of by many as other than a coming and going of numberless personalities, each having its own capabilities, tastes and peculiarities, but with no defined goal or object of attainment. It is, therefore, profitable to have come to the point of realizing that life has some purpose, and of determining to express that purpose day by day. If we can advance in life from stage to stage, what possibilities are there not before us? We must not, however, picture this as a mere striving upward for our own aggrandizement, as that would be only transferring worldly ambition to another plane, and we should consequently defeat our own ends. There is a way of true growth and all who search may know of it; it is along this way that the state of consciousness referred to in the title of our article is reached.

To have seen something of the purpose of life, is to have come to the understanding that life must be lived from the standpoint of unity instead of diversity; that we can no longer regard other people as beings quite separate from ourselves and in no way related to us. This understanding of life has its basis in the spiritual unity of mankind; all men, in essence, are divine, no matter how unaware of it they themselves are, or how obscured it may be in some of them. Of course our consciousness of the divine entirely depends upon the exercise of the will in that direction. If our lives be absorbed in material things, in selfish interests, to the exclusion of the things of the spirit, there can come no response from the higher nature, which will eventually seek other vehicles for expression in the world. On the other hand, if we recognize this as a glorious opportunity, the door of the universe is opened anew to us, and there is no limit to the service we can render.

From what has been said we may rightly infer that the purpose of life is to express the divine through the mortal man. If, then, we have come to the point of knowing this, and, in some measure, of realizing its importance, we may decide to endeavour to embody it in our lives. Having made this decision, we shall be very likely to proceed on our new way of life in a most enthusiastic manner at first. We shall be anxious to tell others what we know, and at the same time be eager to learn more ourselves. Yet while we may appreciate the devotional aspect of the spiritual life to some extent, and no doubt gain a great deal of benefit by it, much of our understanding in these earlier stages will be only of a superficial or intellectual character. We do not know ourselves to anything like the degree that we shall know, as growth opens our eyes. So we may go on in this way for a time, of varying length in each case, until we arrive at that point of development which is spoken of as the "moment of choice." Here we have the opportunity definitely to make up our minds to put our knowledge and our faith to the test. Seeing the two ways before us,

we can, if we so determine, leave the one with which we are more or less familiar, and traverse the one that is new ground. The familiar way is the ordinary worldly struggle for life in competition with others, our sole reliance placed on material methods to achieve our purpose; the unfamiliar way is that whereby we place our whole lives in the hands of the Good Law and the Masters,—those Elder Brothers who are the spiritual teachers of mankind. This has its correspondence in a lower stage of growth where many devout people place their trust in Providence, and accept what comes to them in that spirit. Faith is required in both cases, but the former is more enlightened. We are told that the Masters are the perfect embodiment of the Law, that they always work with it, and consequently do not retard the spiritual progress or advancement of the world. This "moment of choice" might then be said to be practically the beginning of the way, when the neophyte, student or would-be disciple consciously sets out to work with the Law. This definite calling upon the Law, for that is what it amounts to, brings in its train various consequences and associations. We have determined on a certain course of life and it remains to be seen how we face and deal with the tests of that course, as they occur from day to day; they need not be special tests, nor by any means extraordinarily difficult, for we shall find in our psychic and mental make-up plenty of ordinary things to rise above, control or eliminate. So we shall progress for a time in a kind of see-saw fashion, rising above one thing and falling over another, until, by never-failing effort to rise and try again, gradually we are able to maintain some balance, some surer foothold on the road we wish to travel. We must not, however, let this little advance persuade us that we are now immune from attack, for the sleepless adversary will come upon us in unexpected ways, and in a manner that it will take all our strength to resist; it will show us that, thinking we have triumphed in one direction, the same temptation in another form may find us unprepared. We shall, therefore, do well not only to pray but to watch—to keep alert for the things we inevitably shall encounter. It would not seem that our new way of life is altogether a bed of roses, for until now there have been more thorns and prickles than anything else. Yet somehow we could not think of going back to the old life of uncertainty and irresponsibility. We are beginning to realize, if only dimly, that behind all these obstacles, all these ups and downs, there is a joy which only we ourselves can diminish or destroy, and which is infinitely worth all the so-called "pleasures of life" put together, and which, moreover, is open to those poorest in earthly possessions.

We find one other most valuable and helpful thing in the companionship we can experience, as we follow the Gleam; there is no friendship like unto that which has its source in the Soul. We find that no part of the way is untraversed, or without a helping hand where need exists; in fact it may be our good fortune, for a time, to be associated personally with those who are also fellow-pilgrims on the great journey. In that case it would be for us to take advantage of this as much as ever we can; to learn from them, as even they may learn from us; and, at the same time, humbly to remember that above us all

are the light and guidance of the Masters, and that only in so far as we provide the right conditions of harmony and unity—oneness of heart—can we receive that light and guidance which will enable us to do Their work in the world. There is a saying that we are gods if we will it so; which is the opposite of the common expression that we are only human. Between a man and a god—a highly evolved Spiritual Being—there are numberless stages of growth, the great majority of which it is neither in our ability, nor in our province to deal with; but they are, at any rate, all pointers to the possibilities of the human race. As we, then, definitely continue in this new path of life, we not only become associated with others of similar growth, but find that there have been teachers and pupils throughout the ages; and why not to-day? Because they are not blazoned forth is no proof that they do not exist. It may be our opportunity and our great privilege also, to contact fellow-pilgrims who are farther ahead than we, who in themselves are proofs of further stages on the way. But whatever our experience, it strikes home to us that, in the last resort, the crux of the question lies in the amount of real effort we put forth to "live the life" ourselves. So we set out with renewed vigour to learn the lessons and to do the work that is immediately before us. We discover that it needs a positive attitude successfully to accomplish our task in the world, whether in the sphere of our daily occupation, of our home, or in other surroundings. We have a work to do at our stage of development in cultivating and expressing the sunshine of the higher nature, for there is no doubt about it that love, faith, courage, sympathy, patience, and courtesy, do belong to that part of man's being; we have only to meet one who is a disciple, entirely to satisfy ourselves on that head. What then must these things be when expressed by a Master! We have verily a work to accomplish in controlling the personality with all its leanings towards the lower nature, as evidenced in envy, hatred, malice and all uncharitableness; in vanity, jealousy, and in love of the outward shows of life, which at last prove to be hollowness itself, and turn to dust and ashes in the mouth. We have to conquer the perverted appetites of man that are often looked upon as the substance of life itself; those natural functions, regarded even as sacred by all true seers and mystics, that have been and are so degraded from age to age, that it is difficult to withstand the atmosphere of psychic thought this perversion creates.

If through our efforts we have learned, more or less, the right use of the physical body, we have then to undertake the right use of the consciousness in other departments of our being. Away from the psychic side of life is the mental or intellectual; we have set ourselves a task indeed when we realize that we have to determine the character of our thoughts, for that involves constant direction and choice. Our duties largely compel our attention throughout the day, though there will, doubtless, be intervals when we have time, and when we can, if we like, think of our Master and his love for us, and how we can strive to be more worthy of that love. We shall equally be serving the Master by thinking of some little service that we might do for a neighbour or a friend; a letter we might write to cheer and invigorate some soul struggling on life's

highway; or we could meditate on some verse of scripture, or some point in a paper or article, whose meaning is not very clear to us, or which we do not at all understand,—occupied with something, in short, that will be useful and helpful from the point of view of the Soul. So much then for our working hours; though before we proceed to examine our leisure time, it might be as well to say that the more we do with our *might* what our hands find to do, the more effectively shall we exercise the will in our Master's service when we have leisure to follow the bent of our heart's desire.

In passing to our leisure hours we must realize how important and at the root of the matter is our heart's desire; and the significance of the familiar teaching that "Where the treasure is, there will the heart be also," is very clear and definite. We can soon find out where our treasure is, and whether "living the life" is the thing in any degree that we pictured it as being. If it is the delight of our lives, as it more surely becomes as we go along the Path, we shall value our leisure as we have never done before. We shall gradually eliminate the useless and indifferent, and in every way endeavour to employ our time to the very best advantage from the standpoint of that never failing guide and instructor—the Soul. We shall see the word recreation in a new light; we shall see it as re-creation—a building anew, physically, mentally and spiritually, and we shall act accordingly. We shall make all our desires lean to and centre upon, the acquisition of the Eternal Wisdom. Constant effort in this direction is bound to make a difference in the character as time goes on, and we shall see more clearly many things that before were vague and obscure; not only that,—by continuous application we shall acquire a stability and control that will enable us to do our work more efficiently. It may be dawning upon us now, that the relative perfection of control, and of other qualities, is an outward and visible sign of discipleship. If so, every time we gain confirmation of having acted rightly, our view of the way is clearer, and we can better proceed to the next step.

As we review the past, what do we find? We find a gradual turning away from all that is lower, a gradual purification of the mind and heart, and hence a gradual detachment from the so-called "pleasures of life"; a gradual increase of peace, of faith and joy, which are sure indications that we are living our life from its higher side; that this living of life from its higher side is no aloof, indifferent, dreamy, "castle-in-the-air" sort of business by any means; quite the reverse; for all the vigour and alertness we possess are necessary. The gradual transfer of the consciousness from the things of the world to the things of the spirit is the change from the mortal to the immortal, from the human to the divine; and the point at which we first consciously come into contact with the divine, first consciously approach the Master in love and unity of heart, may truly be said to be "The Crown of Human Life."

E. Howard Lincoln.

NORFOLK AND ITS MYSTICS

THE sun sets over an expanse of marshland and reeds, and touches with golden light the silent waters; the evening breeze has dropped and the sailing boats come slowly to their moorings. In the distance is seen a line of sand-dunes, and beyond them the blue sea. Now and then the cry of gulls is heard; a heron flies over, with its long neck and wings outstretched; coots and other water-birds chatter and play among the reeds. The shadows lengthen over the waters; the sun sinks behind the horizon in a glory of flame and gold, leaving long ripples of clouds, like angels' wings. Then there is silence, and the peace of evening descends over Broadland.

This landscape is typical of much of England's county of Norfolk, with its flat expanse of marsh and fen, broken here and there by windmills, or by the great square towers of village churches, and over all the silence of the English countryside. Much of Broadland has, in the last centuries, been reclaimed from the sea, and the land has been drained to afford pasture. In the winter the marshes become impassable, but the waterways form the main roads, and the trading wherries, with their black sails, pass slowly up and down at all times of the year. The low-lying parts of Norfolk constitute the "Broads"; in some parts of the county the fens reach far inland, and into Cambridgeshire, where the great cathedral at Ely stands high on an island above the waters. The drier parts of the country are the wheat-growing lands, and agriculture is the chief occupation; there are few towns of any size, and the people live in scattered farms and small villages, each village having its old church with a tall square or round tower that is a landmark for miles around. In some places there are ruins of convents and monasteries, which date back to the time when Norfolk and Suffolk (the old kingdom of East Anglia) were the land of faith, and men gave generously to the glory of God. The churches are one of the most interesting features of East Anglia, and there are examples of every style of architecture, Saxon, Norman, early English; but the most usual architecture seen in village churches is the Perpendicular style of the 14th century. The casual visitor cannot understand why there are so many great churches for so small a population, until he looks up the history of the county, to find that, in the Middle Ages, East Anglia was an important commercial centre, having the monopoly of the wool-trade with Flanders. Wealthy merchants, wishing to increase merit towards their account in Heaven, founded great churches with the bulk of their fortunes; soldiers and knights, returning from the wars, endowed monasteries and abbeys, with the proceeds of their plunder, and in expiation for their sins. The churches, or the ruins, exist to this day, a record of their faith, though the population has dwindled and the light of faith has grown dim. Some parts of the country are thickly wooded, the haunt of all kinds of birds and beasts;

nearer the coast there is heath and moorland, bright in summer with yellow gorse and purple heather. In the winter, when the fierce winds sweep in from the sea, coast and fen-land and heath are desolate and silent, save for the cry of the birds, and at all times the traveller is impressed by the silence of this country, and the austerity that is its chief characteristic. The severity and the simplicity of the landscape are reflected in the life and character of men and women from this part of the world. The people of Norfolk are a hardy and vigorous race, who have had to struggle to make a scanty living in the harvest of the soil and the harvest of the sea. It is the vigour which, in past centuries, lent purpose and character to their faith, and there is embedded in the race, and in the soil, that austerity which is expressed in churches and landscape and scenery.

In early history, the kingdom of East Anglia passed through all the tumults and invasions of the early English kingdoms. Among its kings was St. Edmund, patron saint and martyr; he was born in the year 840, was made king at the age of 15, and later became a model ruler. At one time he is said to have retired into his royal tower at Hunstanton, for a year, to learn the Psalter by heart. He then emerged to make war on the invading Danes, but they returned to fight him in overwhelming numbers. King Edmund was captured; he offered himself as a ransom for his people, and he was tortured and put to death in the year 870. In the 10th century his relics were removed to Bury St. Edmunds and became a centre of popular devotion. The Danes were not always destroyers. In 1034 King Canute founded the famous abbey of St. Benet, on the banks of the Bure. The ruins of the gateway and the extensive foundations of the abbey can be seen to this day by the yachtsmen of the Broads, and local legend speaks of a secret passage that led, beneath the river, to a place far distant. East Anglia numbers other saints in its annals, besides knights and men-at-arms, gallant sailors and seamen, poets and artists. In recent centuries there has been a special school of Norfolk painters, who have reproduced, in their landscapes, something of the purity and transparency of the atmosphere, its unusual light effects, due to the presence of wide expanses of water, and the soft shades of colouring that are revealed by the reflected light.

The prosperity of the country greatly increased during the 14th century, with the extension of the wool-trade, and the arrival of the Flemish weavers who settled at Norwich and Worstead. They brought their craft and learning, their art and their mysticism over from the Netherlands. Towards the end of that century, the population suffered terribly from the ravages of the Black Death; whole villages were wiped out by the scourge. In the present day, the village of Erpingham has the curious feature of having its church a mile from the village. At the time of the Black Death, the survivors among the village people moved to a place a mile off to avoid the scourge, but the church remained where it had been founded. Many Dutch settlers came over to Norfolk during the religious persecutions of the 16th century. After the Reformation, the country accepted the Protestant religion; the Religious

Orders were driven out, and the famous old monastic foundations fell into disuse and ruin. In the Civil wars of the 17th century, the country, as a whole, was Puritan in its sympathies, and sided with Cromwell. There is a wonderful old church at Blythburgh, in Suffolk, with beautiful sculptures in the roof, of winged angels. There, as in many other churches, Cromwell's soldiers stabled their horses; the men were enraged at the figures of the angels, and tried to shoot them down. But they were poor marksmen, for the angels still survive, and the bullet holes can be seen in the roof, wide of the mark.

A student of history would find much to delight him, in a tour of Norfolk and Suffolk. In earliest times, the see of the bishopric of East Anglia was at Dunwich, which remained for many centuries a famous port, and a centre of religion, with "fifty-two churches, chapels, religious houses and hospitals"; now it is a forgotten village, with interesting old ruins and few inhabitants. Local legend tells of seven great churches buried beneath the sea; it was the custom to build churches on the edge of the cliff, for a landmark to mariners by day and a beacon by night, and as the sea encroached, the churches one after the other fell over the cliff. The chime of their bells may yet be heard, it is said, in the stillness of the evening. Further along the coast there is Southwold, a small town with a marvellous church, its chief feature of interest being a painted rood screen, showing the twelve apostles and the nine choirs of angels. The 15th century rood screens are a feature of many of the East Anglian churches; some have survived the ravages of time and the destructive work of the Reformers, and they reflect the devotion of the Middle Ages. The influence of such art can sometimes be traced in the writings of mystics, who transcribed their revelations as a series of pictures. Ranworth church, in the midst of the Broads, has a famous painted screen, and also a marvellous 15th century Psalter, with exquisite illuminated work. After the Reformation, this book was lost for many centuries, until it came to light at a sale in London in 1911 and was bought back for the church. Thus, at all places, the present and the past are interwoven into one pattern.

One of the most unusual places on the Norfolk coast is Blakeney, now a forlorn village, once a famous port. The boats came up the creek which has now become silted with mud; smugglers sailed up and down by night, or carried their ill-gotten goods in safety over the deserted marshes. The great church stands above the village and can be seen far out at sea, as the mariners often realized to their peril, for its high tower was sometimes used as a "wrecking-tower,"—the townsmen lit false fires to mislead the sailors and wreck them on the shoals, and then they carried off, as plunder, the cargo washed up on shore. There was a famous Carmelite Priory at Blakeney. Now the town is peopled by fisher-folk, and by the ghosts of smugglers and pirates, townsfolk and monks, for:

"Time is dead at Blakeney
In old forgotten Blakeney

What care they for Time's scythe or glass
Who do not feel the hours pass
Who sleep in sea-worn Blakeney."

Enough has perhaps been said to show that Norfolk has its own history and atmosphere, unspoilt by the progress of modern times. The country, as a whole, is isolated; railways are few and trains infrequent, and the rush and roar of the twentieth century has not penetrated its remote villages. The atmosphere of any place may be expressed, but can rarely be described; it is certain that the devotion of by-gone centuries lingers yet around the places made holy by the prayers of suppliants. We are influenced, more than we would admit, by our environment and surroundings; sometimes these appear to us unfavourable, and we react against them, but in time we learn the lesson of acceptance. The roots of our nature strike deep into the country which we love, and from which we draw life and nourishment. "The meek shall inherit the earth" is a beatitude which may be interpreted quite literally, for it is often those who live in lowliness, and close to the soil, who overhear the whispers of Nature, and learn the secrets of the earth, and so, in a true sense, possess the land. If a student of English history were asked to name the districts, in England, where the light of faith burnt most brightly, he might perhaps choose East Anglia, Yorkshire, and Northumbria as affording the most notable examples of the devotion, learning, and spiritual vigour of many centuries. Those who are alive to-day enter into the spiritual inheritance of the past, and consciously or unconsciously, draw life from its life. It would be interesting to members of The Theosophical Society to make a study of those places, in different countries, where the Theosophical movement has taken root and grown into Branches, so as to understand to what extent conditions have been favourable to the revival of the light of Ancient Wisdom which has burnt from time immemorial. Local conditions are certainly influential, whether they appear to us to afford overwhelming difficulties, trials and friction,—material which is there to be overcome, to furnish proof of valour, to exercise the warrior-spirit—or whether they appear more favourable when affording peace, tranquillity and silence, the outer expression of the inner silence in which all true work is performed.

In olden days men and women were often led, by the thirst for perfection, to spend solitary lives as hermits or anchorites, giving their whole time to contemplation, study, and the worship of God. The same ideal is alive in the world to-day, but it is not confined to the rule of life of Solitaries of the East, or to the religious in contemplative orders of the West. It is a life which can be led in the tumult of the world, when he who aspires to such a life has learnt to build the "cell of the heart" and there to dwell. It is interesting to study the lives of hermits of old, to see to what extent the modern ideal may approximate to the spirit of the mediæval solitaries. It has been stated that in the Middle Ages there existed in East Anglia a greater number of hermitages and anchorages than in any other county save Yorkshire. There

were many hermitages along the coast, where the hermits often acted as light-keepers; a chapel, for this purpose, was founded by St. Edmund at Hunstanton. Anchorites were stricter than hermits and did not leave their cells, which were usually attached to a church; such anchorages can still be seen, built against the wall of several of the old churches of Norfolk. Women were no less ready than men to embrace that form of religious life, and two anchoresses of Norfolk have become known to students of mysticism, from their written records—Margery Kempe of Lynn and Juliana of Norwich. It is interesting, before studying their writings, to learn something of the life of an anchoress, and this has been clearly described for us in a thirteenth century document, the Ancren Riwle,[1] which is one of the gems of mediæval mystical literature. During the thirteenth century there were many vocations to the life of anchoress; the Ancren Riwle may have been written for nuns in Dorsetshire who were recluses, and it is possible that the author was a certain Bishop Poore who died in 1237. The treatise sets out, with great precision and clearness, all the details of an inner and outer life of an anchoress, who lived alone, though she might have one or two "hand-maidens"—women of mature years and known discretion—who attended to her wants. The anchoress was to follow a rule of silence and austerity; her life and her prayers were to be the *anchor* of the Church. She might have two meals a day, taken alone, though if any woman friend were to visit her, the hand-maid might "entertain her with good cheer," and the anchoress might "open her window once or twice, and make signs to her of gladness at seeing her." The silence was to be complete on Fridays, and on other days the anchoress was to be sparing of her speech; her time was to be employed in devotions, and work for the church and the poor. She was to have no external cares, and was not to hold a school; her vows were obedience, chastity, and constancy as to her abode. The outward rule was for the guidance of the inner life, and details of the outer life were left to the discretion of the anchoress, who might alter them as occasion arose; only the vows were binding.

The Ancren Riwle is divided into eight short books, and the various subjects are dealt with clearly and in order. The first book is very beautiful, and suggests the religious devotions suitable to an anchoress, whose inner life was to be strengthened by ardent prayer and frequent meditation. The prayers include many of the early liturgical devotions, in which the number seven is found frequently recurring. There was to be special meditation on the Passion at mid-day; all daily life was to be sanctified by prayer and aspiration. The second book deals with the custody of the five senses. The third book describes the vocation of the anchoress; in a curious simile she is likened to a bird, flying with head low—a sign of humility—and wings outstretched, for the wings of Prayer are to bear her to Heaven. She is reminded to keep silence about herself, for good deeds lose their value when spoken about. Books IV, V, and VI deal with temptations, confession and penance,

[1] *Ancren Riwle*, modernized by J. Morton (King's Classics).

with a wealth of detail, and a quiet sense of humour, that prove the author to be an experienced director of the souls of devout women. The seventh book is one of the most beautiful, on the subject of Divine Love; "Pureness of heart is the Love of God only; in this is the whole strength of religious professions." The author quotes, from St. Gregory, "all God's commands are rooted in Love," and discourses of the eternal Love of Christ for the souls of men. Christ is represented as knight and fighter who wages war to win souls; the crucifix hung in the church as the Crusader hangs his shield, is to remind us of "Jesus Christ's knighthood, which He practised on the Cross." The last book returns to external matters, and regulates certain details of domestic life with sound common sense and practical wisdom. The anchoress should not keep domestic animals, except a cat; she must not engage in "traffic." Her clothes must be plain and warm and sufficient to keep out the cold; she should have thick warm shoes, and she might not undertake severe penances and disciplines; she must, at all times, have care of her person, as befits a servant of God. She may have one or two maids, and must be careful to maintain, between them, the peace and concord which is most pleasing to God and most displeasing to the devil. The author puts down his pen with a thankful sigh at the end of the treatise, and having completed his task he declares that: "God knows, it would be more agreeable to me to set out on a journey to Rome, than to begin to do it again."

There exists a beautiful collection of early English mystical treatises, published under the title of *The Cell of Self-Knowledge*[2]—a phrase borrowed from St. Catherine of Siena. It was first printed in 1501, and contains seven treatises by mystics, of various dates, from the 13th to the 15th centuries—a period described as the "golden age of mystical literature." Three of the treatises are by unknown authors, others are written by Richard of St. Victor, St. Catherine of Siena, and Walter Hilton, and finally there is an exquisite little treatise of "Contemplation, taught by Our Lord Jesus Christ, or taken out of the book of Margery Kempe, Ancress of Lynn." The town of Lynn, or rather King's Lynn, was one of the most important towns of Norfolk, and at one time a flourishing port. It is known to have had many religious foundations, during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and at one time to have possessed convents or priories of Benedictines, Augustinians, Franciscans, Carmelites and Dominicans. Nothing whatever is known of Margery Kempe, nor can any trace be found of the book to which the title refers. An old record speaks of one "Margery Kempe" who, between 1284 and 1298, gave up all her rights to certain lands and property in favour of the convent of Christ Church, Canterbury, and it is possible that she became the "Ancress of Lynn" and the recipient of mystic revelations. The fragment of writing which has come down to us shows the profound character of her Love, and the perfect simplicity of her intercourse with her Lord. She had desired to suffer many things in conformity with her Master's sufferings. Her Lord replies:

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[2] *The Cell of Self-Knowledge*, edited by Edmund Gardner.

"Daughter, if thou wear the habergeon or the hair-shirt, fasting bread and water, and if thou saidest every day a thousand Pater Nosters, thou shalt not please Me so well as thou dost when thou art in silence, and suffrest Me to speak in thy soul. Daughter, for to bid many beads, it is good to them that can not better do, and yet it is not perfect. But it is a good way toward perfection. . . . And I have often told thee, daughter, that thinking, weeping, and high contemplation, is the best life on earth, and thou shalt have more Merit in Heaven for one year thinking in thy mind than for an hundred year of praying with thy mouth; and yet thou wilt not believe Me, for thou wilt bid many beads." Her Lord ever counsels her: "Have mind of thy wickedness, and think on My goodness." Her humility—that hall-mark of the saints—increased with her advance in the way of contemplation; her charity embraced all mankind, and her prayers were earnest for holy men and for sinners, for Christians and Saracens. It would seem that she understood the meaning of suffering and self-sacrifice, accepted gladly for love of the Crucified. "Lord," she said, "for Thy great pain have mercy on my little pain." And she is reminded that "By this way came I and all My disciples."

Margery Kempe of Lynn was the precursor of another Norfolk anchoress and mystic, Juliana of Norwich, of whom something may be said in a later article.

S. C.

God never imposes a duty without giving strength and time to do it.—RUSKIN.

ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

THE Philosopher, who declares that he is never disappointed or discouraged because he always expects the impossible, none the less sat down with a studied exhibition of collapse.

"I give it up," he said. "I have talked myself hoarse, and the more I talk, the more confused they become. They cannot see that Truth can be expressed in terms of paradox only,—by which I mean that the *nous*, one of whose functions is to recognize differences, cannot perceive the Truth until it has learned to include in its range of vision, not only the difference, or contradiction, but also, and simultaneously, the point of reconciliation. I talk to them one day, and present one aspect of the truth; I talk to them another day, and present another aspect of the truth. They go away, and see nothing but a contradiction. If I speak of freedom, of liberty, as something to be intensely desired, and then, later, of obedience, of glad servitude, as an ideal condition, they feel as if I had left them in a fog. Even when I explain to them that true freedom can be won only by obedience to divine law, and that obedience which does not give the sense of freedom is an imperfect obedience,—they are inclined to think that I have been performing mental gymnastics for their bewilderment, rather than striving, to the best of my ability, to convey the truth in the only way in which Truth can be conveyed."

"Well," remarked the Lawyer cheerfully, "if a class-room of boys drives you to exasperation, what, do you suppose, must be the effect upon an Adept when trying to teach us!"

"An Adept," was the retort, "is supposed to be completely and permanently on top of his nerves. I am not an Adept."

"But have you ever thought what it must cost the Adept, from minute to minute, to maintain his poise, his mastery? His nerves must be much more alive than ours, his perceptions infinitely more keen! Think, for instance, of the present condition of France, and of some Adept or Master whose function it is to watch over its destinies. We must assume that he loves the place and its people; that he sees their capacities; that his right—which means his ability—to interfere is limited strictly by Karma, and that even then his success must depend upon the receptivity of those who neither look nor listen for inner guidance. I should think he would go insane!"

"But surely some people in France must listen for inner guidance," the Student expostulated.

"Many, doubtless; but are they men of affairs, men of influence? Naturally, I am only speculating, but I have often thought of Foch, of Castelnau and others—sincerely religious men—men of prayer—whose Roman Catholicism, however, is part of the fibre of their being. This means, first, that they would pay more attention to the opinions of their confessor than to any

inner promptings they might receive, and, secondly, that they would interpret anything they felt to be true, in terms of the 'truths' of their Church and what they believe to be its needs. It would be easier, probably, to reach a freethinker."

"But what is the matter with France?"

"The worship of material success. The poverty left by the war has been so bitter, the prosperity of Germany and America has seemed so unjust, that principles are being sacrificed and short-sighted expediencies set up in their place. The French people are listening to those who promise them the quickest relief,—prepared to snatch at a *sou* at the cost of their spiritual integrity, and of course, therefore, at the cost ultimately even of material profit. They are being untrue to themselves—not for the first time in their history; and they are all the more to blame because their superior intelligence makes them more responsible than other nations. No one who loves them and who believes in them can fail to be heart-broken over the 'note,' the tone, they are now striking internationally, although it might have been expected, I suppose, so long as their form of government is so utterly unsuited to their genius. They have sense enough to have no respect for their politicians, and yet they accept their leadership."

"Incidentally," the Historian interjected, "I don't think you have been fair to the French Roman Catholic. I don't think he is as priest-ridden as you suggest."

"It is not easy to be fair in a general statement," the Lawyer replied; "but when a man is notoriously *dévot*, much may be inferred. I was reading only the other day a treatise entitled *La Journée des Malades*, by the Abbé Henri Perreyve, many of whose books are unusually helpful, and which still have an immense circulation. Listen to what he says about priests. It is on page 80: 'The priest is God in Jesus Christ when he teaches; for the truths which he declares are of the supernatural order, and are divine, eternal, unchangeable. . . . The priest is God in Jesus Christ when he binds and unbinds the consciences of men. . . .' It is true that the Abbé admits that the priest is 'a mixture of man and of God,' and that therefore, 'the priest is an enigma but a divine enigma.' This admission in no way affects, however, the terrible significance of his basic dogma. Incidentally, the attitude expressed in *The Mahatma Letters* toward priestcraft should be easy to understand when priesthood at its best can enunciate such a proposition as that of the Abbé Perreyve. My point is, however, that although many practising Catholics doubtless accept such a doctrine without a thought, just as many Protestants accept the Creed, those who really believe it and whose conduct therefore is influenced by it, necessarily bring their opinions about most things into harmony with the views of the priesthood; while the priesthood, with rare exceptions, usually brings its opinions into harmony with the views of Rome. Consequently I think I was justified in saying what I did about the difficulty of reaching such people 'from within.'"

"I want to talk about something else!" the Engineer now exclaimed,

thrusting up his arm like a small boy at school. "I want to talk about myself! If the Recorder wants us to supply him with 'copy,' he must pay for it occasionally by listening to personal revelations, including feelings, grievances, hopes and fears: and I am full of an idea."

"Delighted to hear it," the Recorder answered. "Charmed to listen, too; but I won't promise to record a word of it. Further, I should like to remind you of a saying of Balzac,—that 'one of the most important rules in the science of manners is that you preserve an almost absolute silence concerning yourself'!"

"That's easy," retorted the Engineer. "I'll attribute my idea, as well as my feelings about it, to Smith; or you can put it into the third person in the 'Screen.' It's not my idea anyhow. It's as old as the hills and was echoed a few weeks ago at a meeting of the New York Branch. Briefly, this: we make a mistake when we think of the lower nature chiefly in terms of 'low' or 'immoral,' as compared with the higher or moral. The so-called lower nature is a lunatic, *per se*, and we shall not handle it, or ourselves, effectually, until we are saturated with that realization. In many of his moods the average man ceases to be interested in morality, and is inclined to take refuge behind what he calls the 'natural.' The fact is that there is nothing 'natural' about the lower personal self. Wild animals are natural; their instincts are natural; but man perverted, ages ago, whatever was natural in his make-up, until now it is a twisted, crazy, demoniac creature, howling or, in some cases, whining for things which, when gained, invariably bring misery to itself and also increased desire for them. Now the hall-mark of lunacy is the inability to see facts and to foresee consequences; to imagine, for instance, that iced water will boil an egg, or to be convinced that you are the King of France when actually you are the son of an Irish waiter or of a Chinese laundryman. It is upon such illusions as these that the life of the lunatic self depends. So-and-so is vain; he wants to shine in the eyes of other people. To do this, he displays his 'wares': his physical strength, or his learning, or his asceticism, or his teeth, or his modesty,—the only result being that other people, though blind to their own peculiarities, read him like an open book, and, instead of admiring him, call him a vain ass. He defeats his own end, as the lower nature invariably does, and as ordinary good sense would foresee,—a lunatic performance. The innate folly of the creature could be illustrated more easily, more perfectly, in the domain of sex and its illusions,—but I know that the Recorder could not use anything under that head. Take, instead, the case of a brother and sister (I know them well), both of them married, and sincerely attached to one another, but who quarrelled some two years ago about a cake which the sister had baked. I assume that unkind things were said by both of them. In any case, they have not been on speaking terms from that day to this. Both of them regret it; both of them admit that their behaviour is foolish and worse; yet it looks as if they would wait for reconciliation until their old mother dies—whose grief, meanwhile, in no way moves them! Explain it as you choose,—as due to false pride or to self-centredness,

or to any other trait of the personal self: it is a lunatic performance from any point of view; and the worst of it is that most of us continue to identify ourselves with the lunatics, at least in some respect, instead of treating them as the superintendent of an asylum treats his patients,—a straight-jacket for some, and a change of occupation, with diverted attention, for others."

"I agree with every word you've said," declared the Student; "but I, in my turn, want to change the subject. It's worse than talking 'shop.' I've lived with my lunatics for more years than I can number. Past lives reveal nothing but lunatics and yet more lunatics—miles and millions of them. I spend the better part of my life hurling 'ass' and 'idiot' at their chatter. There must be times when the most benevolent of superintendents finds his patients getting on his nerves, and when he needs to assure himself positively and frequently that he is not one of them. I want to be reminded that I'm none of that, none of that." And the Student spoke almost as if he meant it.

"That you are the real self?" the Ancient commented. "Yes, we do not think or speak of that sufficiently. We should read about it more than we do. It is good for tired hearts and frayed nerves. It is better still for the soul. That which is not *in* a man, he cannot know; that which he knows, must be in him. So many people ask, 'How can I know that Eternal?' If they ask it with desire, the desire they feel is the desire of the Eternal in them that they shall know Him; it is His desire to be known. 'Wheresoever ye turn, there is the face of Allah'; but the heart of Allah is in the net of your own heart. The same thing was said by Christ to Blaise Pascal in another way: 'Console-toi, tu ne me chercherais pas, si tu ne m'avais trouvé'—'Be comforted; thou wouldst not seek me if thou hadst not found me.' It is the ancient mystery, the simplest of all mysteries. Truly, if we loved the Light sufficiently, the darkness would cease to trouble us; if we were to listen to the voice of the Highest, we should no longer hear the chatter of our wandering, foolish selves. Yet the life in them must be redeemed, for it is His life, which we have perverted; besides which, there is a purpose in all this,—the formation of a spiritual and independent microcosm, as the soul cures and masters its 'purgations.'"

"It is easier, I think," said the Student, "to believe in a Master or in Masters, and in a Logos or Universal Self, than in one's own inner existence as a being of wisdom and light. Experience supplies so many adverse arguments!"

"Try Mr. Judge's method," the Ancient replied. "Look for the things in yourself that you like and wish to cultivate: your love of truth, of beauty, of goodness; your desire to be generous, unselfish, noble. Look for the things that are worthy of immortality, for those are a part of your real self."

"Some of the Sufis," said the Orientalist, "used to invoke what they called their 'perfect natures.' It appeared to them as a form, a being, during the sleep of the body. The Sufi used a special *mantram* before going to sleep, after a preparation of some days in the matter of food and religious exercises.

Then a form appeared to him, saying 'I am thy perfect nature,' and would answer any question previously prepared."

"'Nearer than hands and feet,'" quoted the Lawyer. "We seek afar off, and always the answer is: 'one step beyond myself.' Who was it who said, 'God hath made all atoms in space mirrors, and fronteth each one with His perfect face'?"

"It was Jāmī," the Orientalist replied. "Here is another translation of the whole passage:

> "'Wherever Beauty dwells
> Such is its nature, and its heritage
> From Everlasting Beauty, which emerged
> From realms of purity to shine upon
> The worlds, and all the souls that dwell therein.
> One gleam fell from It on the Universe
> And on the angels, and this single ray
> Dazzled the angels till their senses whirled
> Like the revolving sky. In divers forms
> Each mirror showed it forth, and everywhere
> Its praise was chanted in new harmonies.
> . . . . . .
> Each speck of matter, did He constitute
> A mirror, causing each one to reflect
> The beauty of His visage. From the rose
> Flashed forth His beauty, and the nightingale,
> Beholding it, loved madly . . .
> Where'er thou seest a veil,
> Beneath that veil He hides. Whatever heart
> Doth yield to love, He charms it. In His love
> The heart hath life. Longing for Him, the soul
> *Hath* victory. . . .'"

"Heaven bless you," commented the Lawyer. "That is just the sort of food we need; just the sort of food with which art and literature ought to supply us—revelations of divine beauty in man and in nature,—instead of which they give us 'studies' of cesspools and 'impressions' of hell. How I hate modern art—that is 'modern'! 'Art for Art's sake'—musical, pictorial and literary 'stunts': Kama-manas at its worst! Compare them with those who lifted the veil between the seen and the unseen, such as Turner, and with those who revealed divine beauty in human form, such as Praxiteles! I wish someone would write an article for the QUARTERLY on that subject. It is beyond me,—and I certainly don't want to change our present line of thought, which is an unspeakable relief after a dose of human nature as it is, one's own included. Help us for a few minutes to get away from it, to forget it. Tell us some more about the real self, the real world."

"We don't need to get away from it or to forget it," the Ancient answered; "what we need as a rule is to see, and to insist upon seeing, the real within and behind an appearance that belies the reality. Too often we allow ourselves to be beaten down by the insistence of surface impressions—of surface explosions."

"I know," said the Lawyer; "we are such children in those respects. One's only hope is that Compassion will have compassion on our childishness."

"You too have been re-reading it!" smiled the Ancient.

"Coventry Patmore's poem? Yes, I have."

"Read it to us," exclaimed the others.

"I am afraid it has no connection whatever with the subject we were discussing."

"Unless," suggested the Ancient, "anything that evokes the real self—our 'perfect nature'—or that lifts us to its plane of consciousness, serves the very purpose we had in view."

So the Lawyer read "The Toys":—

"My little son, who looked from thoughtful eyes
And moved and spoke in quiet grown-up wise,
Having my law the seventh time disobeyed,
I struck him, and dismissed
With hard words and unkissed,
—His Mother, who was patient, being dead.
Then, fearing lest his grief should hinder sleep,
I visited his bed,
But found him slumbering deep,
With darkened eyelids, and their lashes yet
From his late sobbing wet.
And I, with moan,
Kissing away his tears, left others of my own;
For, on a table drawn beside his head,
He had put, within his reach,
A box of counters and a red-veined stone,
A piece of glass abraded by the beach,
And six or seven shells,
A bottle with bluebells,
And two French copper coins, ranged there with careful art,
To comfort his sad heart.
So when that night I prayed
To God, I wept, and said:
Ah, when at last we lie with trancèd breath,
Not vexing Thee in death,
And Thou rememberest of what toys
We made our joys,
How weakly understood

Thy great commanded good,
Then, fatherly not less
Than I whom Thou hast moulded from the clay,
Thou'lt leave Thy wrath, and say,
'I will be sorry for their childishness.'"

"Beautiful, is it not?"

"It certainly is," the Student responded; "and what restraint, what admirable simplicity! What a delight it is to get into that current again! Men have misused Beauty as they have not been able to misuse Truth and Goodness—though they have done their best to use all three for selfish and despicable ends. None the less, Beauty still cries to us:

"'Look forth on everlastingness!
Through the coil'd waters and the ebb of light
I'll be thy sail!'"

"And that Eternal Beauty is the only real." It was the Ancient who spoke. "Life seems hopeless at times—tragically hopeless when we are young, sadly hopeless when we are old. Yet it is the lower self that sees things in that light, and we should treat such moments as moments of shame, driving them from us as the money-changers were driven from the Temple. At our worst and lowest we can remember that (if you will forgive so oft-quoted a verse)—,

"'Sometimes a breath floats by me,
An odour from Dreamland sent,
That makes the ghost seem nigh me
Of a splendour that came and went,
Of a life lived somewhere, I know not
In what diviner sphere,
Or memories that stay not and go not,
Like music heard once by an ear
That cannot forget or reclaim it,
A something so shy, it would shame it
To make it a show,
A something too vague, could I name it,
For others to know,
As if I had lived it or dreamed it,
As if I had acted or schemed it,
Long ago!'"

"You haven't had any poetry in the 'Screen' for years," said the Engineer, "and now your readers will think that we've suddenly become poetry-mad! I vote for some more. It's in a good cause anyhow. The Student's savage-breasted lunatics must have wilted already. A little more, and they'll eat out of his hand!"

"I hope not," the Student retorted. "You may have them, gladly, if you're looking for more pets of that description. I should have thought that your own supply would have seen you through!"

"Ha, ha! Not quite wilted yet," laughed the Engineer; "and yours will go down with colours flying, as I might have known. . . . I want another poem, please."

"I cannot supply the poem," the Ancient commented, "but I do think that while we are on this general subject of the lower or elemental self, and of escape from it, we ought not to overlook self-centredness as the secret of its hold over us, while the secret of escape from its clutches is love of that which is outside of and greater than oneself,—preferably love of the Masters or of a Master. Just as self-love is the root of all evil—and of all lunacy—unselfish love and devotion is not only the beginning but the end of all wisdom,—and of all peace. We should remember, further, that in this respect we do not have to take the initiative (indeed, we could not), because the more self-centred we are, and in that sense 'lost,' the more ardently are we being sought; so that all we need is to respond,—any turning of the heart from self, being but an answer to that far cry to turn again home."

Quoth the Lawyer:—

"When the night was in the sky,
And heavily went the hours,
My Beloved drew nigh
With His Hands full of flowers—
Burning red flowers
Like cups of scented wine—
And He said, 'They are all ours,
Thine and Mine.

'I gathered them from the bitter Tree—
Why dost thou start?
I gathered the Five of them for thee,
Child of My Heart.
These are they that have wrung my Heart,
And with fiercest pangs have moved Me—
I gathered them—why dost thou shrink apart?
In the house of them that loved Me.'"

"Thank you," said the Ancient. "Who wrote it?"

"I don't remember; but it's in *The Oxford Book of English Mystical Verse*, which contains an index of first lines, and the first line of the first verse is 'When the storm was in the sky.'"

"There is something by Louise Imogen Guiney which perhaps completes the pattern of our sampler," the Lawyer continued. "Probably you know it,"—and he quoted:

"A man said to his angel
'My spirits are fallen thro',
And I cannot carry this battle;
O brother, what shall I do?'
. . . . . .
Then said to the man his angel,
'Thou wavering witless soul,
Back to the ranks! What matter
To win or lose the whole,
As judged by the little judges
Who hearken not well, nor see?
Not thus, by the outer issue,
The Wise shall interpret thee!'"

"Then the angel bids the disheartened mortal stand up boldly to defy,

"'Though out of the past they gather,
Mind's Doubt and Bodily Pain,
And pallid Thirst of the Spirit
That is kin to the other twain,
And Grief in a cloud of banners,
And ringletted vain Desires,
And Vice with the spoils upon him
Of thee and thy beaten sires,—
. . . . . .
'Thy part is with broken sabre
To rise on the last redoubt;
To fear not sensible failure,
Nor covet the game at all,
But fighting, fighting, fighting,
Die, driven against the wall.'"

"One more, if time and space permit," the Philosopher pleaded; "from a poem by Edmund Gosse:

"Not with a choir of angels without number,
And noise of lutes and lyres,
But gently, with the woven veil of slumber
Across Thine awful fires,
We yearn to watch Thy face, serene and tender,
Melt, smiling, calm and sweet,
Where round the print of thorns, in thornlike splendour,
Transcendent glories meet.
. . . . . .
"Most sweet of all, when dark the way and moonless,
To feel a touch, a breath,

And know our weary spirits are not tuneless,
Our unseen goal not Death;
To know that Thou, in all Thy old sweet fashion,
Art near us to sustain!
We praise Thee, Lord, by all Thy tears and passion,
By all Thy cross and pain!

"For when this night of toil and tears is over,
Across the hills of spice,
Thyself wilt meet us, glowing like a lover
Before Love's Paradise."

"For old sake's sake," said the Student, "give us George Eliot before we adjourn. How does it go? 'O may I join the choir invisible.' You know,"—and he turned appealingly to the Lawyer.

"She begins it," was the response, "with a quotation, the source of which I do not know:

"'"'Tis, by comparison, an easy task
Earth to despise, but to converse with heaven—
This is not easy.'

"Then she opens,—

"'"O may I join the choir invisible
Of those immortal dead who live again
In minds made better by their presence: live
In pulses stirred to generosity,
In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
For miserable aims that end with self,
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,
And with their mild persistence urge man's search
To vaster issues. . . .
May I reach
That purest heaven, be to other souls
The cup of strength in some great agony,
Enkindle generous ardour, feed pure love,
Beget the smiles that have no cruelty—
Be the sweet presence of a good diffused,
As in diffusion ever more intense.
So shall I join the choir invisible
Whose music is the gladness of the world.'"

T.

LETTERS TO STUDENTS

New Year's, 1915.

DEAR——

Thank you for your letter.

You have tried and are trying. You know—we all know—that if one tries and continues to try one wins out, no matter what the task. Therefore take heart of grace, and go on trying, with the assurance that all will be well.

You are too self-conscious. Self-consciousness can be a very bad thing, when it manifests in the cruder or grosser ways—or it can be a half-good thing, when it takes the form of concentrating on self, for the purpose of self-improvement. But even then it is self-centred, and that means that it contains an element that must be got rid of.

You need to transfer your interest from yourself to the Master or to the Cause. Make one or the other the mainspring of your life, and let your interest in yourself and your efforts toward self-improvement, be to fit yourself for better work for the Master or for the Cause. Do not be interested in yourself save for this reason. Do not think of yourself, save from this point of view.

You should not care what you are, or do, or say, or think, or how you look, or dress, or act, save as these things bear upon the Master's work. Do things because he wants them done, not because you want them. Be good because he wants you to be good, not because you want to be good, or think you ought to be good.

You have my sincere prayers for your New Year.

As always,

C. A. GRISCOM.

January 16th, 1915.

DEAR——

Please pardon pencil. I am truly very glad you continue to be happy. That makes me happy.

As for questions about "Duty to Oneself"; if you have Pusey's *Private Prayers*, and you should get it if you have it not, you will find a section in the end of the little book on Self-examination, Appendix ii. Many of these questions concern our Duty to God, many our Duty to Others, many our Duty to Ourselves. All you have to do is to read them to discover to which category they belong—although some of his questions in this form cover two categories. Also in the *Treasury of Devotion*, you will find not only an examination on the Ten Commandments which is searching and true, but also one on the

seven deadly sins which goes into things in detail, and which contains many questions on our duty to ourselves. However, as all this is general, and you love specific information, I append a brief form of Self-examination on the threefold basis I have suggested:

Duty to God.

Have I neglected any spiritual duty through sloth or carelessness, or because of wilful distractions?

Have I lacked faith in God's mercy and love?

Have I spoken with levity or disrespect of anything belonging to religion, etc., etc., etc.

Duty to Others.

Have I entertained feelings of jealousy, aversion, resentment or contempt?

Have I been unkind in act or speech?

Have I judged or suspected others harshly or rashly?

Have I yielded to impatience or irritability?

Have I told lies?

Duty to Myself.

Have I yielded to thoughts or feelings of vanity or pride?

Have I yielded to sensuality, sloth or idleness?

Have I neglected or done carelessly my appointed work?

Have I indulged in idle, useless thoughts and vain imaginings, in day-dreaming?

Have I sinned against the spirit of the vow of poverty by extravagance or waste?

Have I disobeyed any order, or murmured against any direction?

I think that these will give you the idea. I have not written them down for your special case, therefore it does not follow that they suit you. Disregard those which are meaningless, and add other questions you think you should ask yourself. But before you discard, be sure that the question you do not like or understand does not contain a point which you should ask yourself in some other form.

The vow of chastity, for instance, in addition to the conventional meaning, covers the whole ground of physical, mental, and moral purity, from washing yourself properly up to the subtlest kinds of mental and moral impurities:—thoughts and feelings which are usually not considered impure at all, but which are tainted, if looked at from the Master's point of view.

To go back to the *Treasury of Devotion*, the first four Commandments and the questions asked under them, refer to our Duty to God. The 5th and 6th, and 8th, refer to our Duty to Others. The 7th, 9th, and 10th, to our Duty to Ourselves. But these all overlap more or less, and cover two or more categories.

I trust, however, that this will give you a start. I shall be glad to do anything I can to help further.

Sincerely,

C. A. Griscom.

May 21st, 1915.

DEAR——

I am much obliged for your letter which is satisfactory in the main. But why, oh why, after we have all told you something five hundred times, did you dismiss it as a "fender, not meaning anything in particular, but intended to stop" your worrying me? Is there no way in which we can get this idea into your head and get you to act on it?

Now to be specific and definite. I do not think you need any outward physical repression. You have no obvious faults of manner or bearing or attitude. Therefore, take as your definite practice this same old matter of thinking and saying derogatory things of yourself. Forbid yourself such thoughts as well as their expression in speech or action. Pinch yourself well whenever you catch yourself at it, and then, at night, for every breaking of your rule, stand up and recite the enclosed sentiment, and *mean* it. I do not approve of either of your proposed penances.

I hope this is clear and simple and definite.

With best wishes,

I am, sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

June 4th, 1915.

DEAR——

. . . . . .

By all means, try to walk on your toes, instead of noisily on your heels. . . .

What you say about squeamishness is characteristic. It is a *virtue*, not a fault, as you seem to think. The disciple ought to be squeamish, and the more squeamish you are, the better. Things, lots of things, ought to "turn your stomach." But you must be careful how you act, and must learn to control all outward manifestations of your feelings, unless circumstances call for a definite expression of them. We get more and more sensitive in every way, but with the increased sensitiveness must go increased self-control.

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

June 20th, 1915.

DEAR——

I told you some time ago that you were one of my blessings, and now you have proved it by writing me such a kind and generous and inspiring letter. I simply have to try to live up to your praise and your expectations.

I shall try to reply to your other letters later.

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

June 26th, 1915.

DEAR——

I am glad to be able to write that I have been directed to say, in response to your recent note, that you may resume your fortnightly reports to me, provided you confine them to recording the successes you have, the virtues you express, and do not make them a history of your shortcomings.

This does not mean that you cannot refer to genuine perplexities and difficulties, save when these seem to arise from deficiencies of yours. Circumstances often create problems for us to solve. Discuss these freely and as you like. But beware of any self-depreciation.

With kind regards,

I am, sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

July 22nd, 1915.

DEAR——

Your record seems to me to show improvement of the kind desired, but there is still a tendency to confuse performance with some ideal, to your detriment. Do not make outer action your criterion of achievement. It does not matter very much what we do, what we accomplish. You are always trying to *do* things, not only with yourself, which often is right, but with others, which usually is not right. And you gauge your day by the amount you have done, with yourself or with others, not realizing that it is your motive, your desire, your attitude of mind and heart, which really matter.

Your desire to influence ——— to act and think in a certain way which seemed to you desirable, would have power to influence her to be and to do what you want, what you consider desirable, so far as the Master sees it to be desirable; and beyond that, he would use the power of your good intentions to help in other ways he knows of, and which you do not know. The moment you go further than this, and press for results, and try to get evidence of the success of your plan, and make outer results the measure of your success, you are going beyond the legitimate bounds of your activity, and are likely to hinder and interfere. If *your* plan is not wholly good (and how can you hope for such a miracle?), then your pressure to accomplish something not wholly good, negatives all your good intentions and your wish to help and benefit.

In other words, when she, or anyone else, is under pressure, you can and ought to want to help, to inspire, stimulate, encourage, and pray for the person. But the moment you decide *what* she ought to do, and *how* she ought to feel, you cross the border line and incur great danger, and assume an unwarranted responsibility. One of the minor consequences is that you are sure to get on her nerves.

I hope this is all clear.

With kind regards,

I am, sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

August 26, 1915.

DEAR——

Referring to your letter of the 15th: "In effect, to wish to love God is to love Him:—"

"When I loved Thee in consolation, O my God, I was very happy. Now that I am in a dry and desert land, I will love Thee better than when feeling the sweetness of Thy love. My heart tells me I do not love Thee: then will I love Thee with my will, in spite of my heart."

As always,

C. A. GRISCOM.

September 18th, 1915.

DEAR——

I spoke of what you ask in your letter to ———, who said that everything depended upon what you meant. It might mean just a little, or it might mean everything; that only you could decide this; as in all the early steps. You must make the decision, take the responsibility.

If you want, or think you want, to be a "novice," you must create the conditions yourself, constitute yourself it, make your own "novitiate," your own rules, be your own novice-mistress. This will help you ascertain how much in earnest you are, without any danger to yourself or to others.

There are books you can read. St. Teresa wrote much about novices. Her *Way of Perfection* was written for them. There is another book, by Mother Francis Rafael, *The Daily Life of a Religious*, which might help you make up your mind,—for that is the point: for you to find out what you *want;* see what is required, and then see quite honestly how much of that appeals to you and you are willing for. Of course these books are written for Catholic Sisterhoods, but the *principles* of the religious life are the same. Ascertain these principles. Take the course of life outlined for their Religious Orders by the Roman Catholic Church, which are all based on these principles, and adapt them to your duties and necessary mode of life. I say *necessary*, for there will be many unnecessary habits, luxuries, etc., which you will have to surrender, as you will find out if you honestly try it.

But above all, remember this, ——— tells me specially to emphasize it, that you are not under the least necessity to do anything of the kind; that it is your own notion, and your own responsibility altogether. No one will be to blame, if it be a failure, but yourself: to no one but yourself will credit be due, if it be a success. Indeed, one of your first tests to yourself, as to whether you are really in earnest about it, or only fancying it, will be in your ardent desire to try the thing quite alone, even if there were no one else in all the world the least bit interested. For those who are really most interested will read your heart, and judge you by that alone. Those who love the religious life are jealous of the place it holds, and cannot share it with those who look upon it as a sacrifice, rather than the joy and privilege it is. If a

man love his chains and grieve over losing them, I suppose the best thing is to leave him with them until he discovers that they are chains. I have never known argument or eloquence to effect this result.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely yours,

C. A. GRISCOM.

October 26th, 1915.

DEAR——

I have not much to say on your long letter to ——— about your work. He was anxious that you should not fall into the family failing of only being able to be interested in and work at one thing at a time, and he did not want you to go ahead and resign from the activities at the Chapel.

You say that you do not feel that you are of any use in these activities, especially certain of them, but that is not the point. You are *not* needed in them, or in anything else. Get that idea firmly in your mind. But you need them very much indeed, which is the reason why we do not want you to drop them. We must get out of our minds the idea, very prevalent, that the Master needs us in certain work. He puts us in work because we need it, not because the work needs us; and we should do *everything* in this spirit and from this standpoint. What *we* can contribute is our love and devotion.

In re-reading this I can see a good chance of your misunderstanding the last of it. I do not think your real trouble is lack of feeling, so much as lack of belief in the feeling—in your heart and in the hearts of others, for you. You need more trust and faith, in the power of your own and other hearts, to feel as the Master would wish them to feel.

If you believed that someone liked you, and so acted, you would get along much better than if you acted as if you were trying to make that person like you. See?

I am keeping your records for a few days more.

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

REVIEWS

The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett, transcribed by A. T. Barker; published by T. Fisher Unwin, Ltd., London, and Frederick A. Stokes Company, New York. Price, $7.50.

The personality of Madame H. P. Blavatsky at the various stages of her mission, will remain, and, for the "profane," is intended to remain, one of the greatest mysteries of history. The publication of these letters, instead of helping to solve the problem, will merely prove once more the truth of the saying that "whosoever hath (understanding), to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have."

As in the case of *The Mahatma Letters*, we consider publication dishonourable. Letter after letter in this collection was marked by their writer, "Private and Confidential" or "Secret," while almost without exception their contents show that they were intended for the recipient and his wife only. We do not question Mr. Barker's motive in this matter, for we know nothing about it. Owing to dissensions in Mrs. Besant's Society, of which he is a member, and particularly on account of the spiritualistic and psychic practices which she appears to encourage, publication doubtless seemed expedient; but to base action on an appearance of expediency at the cost of violating eternal principles of honour, must always be wrong and therefore must also be bad policy. Further, if Mrs. Besant and her misguided followers consider that they know more about the *post-mortem* states than the H. P. B. of *The Key to Theosophy*, what reason can there be to suppose that they will listen to the H. P. B. of these letters? "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead"! From every standpoint, therefore, we regard publication as inexcusable.

None the less, now that they are published, and are likely to be read and criticized by inquirers as well as by enemies of Theosophy, it will certainly be necessary for some older students to read them, so as to be in a position to defend a Lodge messenger to whom we owe all the knowledge of Theosophy which we now possess. Our debt to H. P. Blavatsky is incalculable. Her letters to Sinnett, properly understood, or, rather, not too hopelessly misunderstood, can only increase our sense of obligation. They are meat for the strong,—not milk for babes; and they certainly were not written for perusal by *les jeunes filles*. Among others who inspired them was (is) an Adept who is a past-master in "shock tactics." Does not the earlier history of the T. S. prove it! The amount of force liberated through H. P. Blavatsky comes nearer to being a standard of her greatness than any ordinary criterion, and it would be almost impossible to read her letters without gaining some sense of that force, if it were only in terms of her intense and constant suffering, which made her life a martyrdom—and a superb victory.

T.

Buddhist Philosophy in India and Ceylon, By A. Berriedale Keith, D.C.L., D. Litt.; Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1923; price, $3.50.

This book is one of a number of able works on Buddhism, with special reference to Northern Buddhism, which have recently appeared. Their general tendency has been to rescue the teachings of the Buddha from the rationalistic and materialistic mutilations which these teachings suffered, a generation ago. This work should, perhaps, be discussed as a part of the series, but to do this within the limits of a review is obviously impracticable.

Dr. Keith, who is Regius Professor of Sanskrit and Comparative Philology at the University

of Edinburgh, appears to be excellently equipped, both by temperament and scholarship, to survey the whole literature of Buddhism, not only in Pali and Sanskrit, but also in Tibetan, Chinese and Japanese, into which so many Sanskrit Buddhist books were translated in the great missionary period. Dr. Keith, with clearness and careful accuracy, unfolds for us the history of this long cycle of scriptures, so far as it is at present known to Western scholars; he further gives us a convincing analysis of the philosophical and ethical ideas and ideals which were dominant at each period of this long development, showing exceptional ability to follow with sympathetic understanding the sometimes remote thought-processes of one or another Buddhist doctor of philosophy.

The most valuable part of Dr. Keith's book appears to the present reviewer to be that in which he develops the contrast between the Hinayana and the Mahayana teachings; the former, the "Lesser Vehicle," being broadly synonymous with the Buddhism of the South, of Ceylon, Siam and Burma; while the latter, the "Greater Vehicle," is the Buddhism of the North, of Tibet, China and Japan. Perhaps the contrast is best brought out by the use of two words: the "monk" of the Southern Hinayana, as contrasted with the "adept" of the Northern Mahayana. This contrast may be illustrated by the following passage:

"It is now possible to understand the claims of pre-eminence over the Hinayana insisted upon for the Mahayana by both Asanga and Vasubandhu. . . . The Mahayana is comprehensive; whatever has been taught by Buddhas, not by Shakyamuni in one life alone, is accepted; nay more, as we have seen, whatever is well said is to be deemed the word of a Buddha. Secondly, the Mahayana aims at general salvation, not at individual release, thus excelling in love for all created things. Thirdly, the Mahayana is intellectually wider in range than the Hinayana; the latter denies the reality of the self, the former goes so far as to deny all phenomenal reality whatever. Fourthly, the Mahayana inculcates spiritual energy; to seek swift release for oneself is not its aim as it is that of the Shravaka. Fifthly, the Mahayana is skilled in the manifold means to lead men to salvation; it is unwearied in their varied application. Moreover, it leads to a far higher ideal; the adept aims to become, not a mere saint, but a Buddha in his complete perfection. Lastly, when an adept becomes a Buddha, he has the infinite power of manifesting himself throughout the universe in a body of bliss."

Students of Mme. H. P. Blavatsky's writings will remember that she has much to say concerning Northern Buddhism, which she studied in the Himalayan regions; concerning the Nirmanakaya and the Sambhogakaya, which is "the body of bliss," Mme. Blavatsky wrote, in 1888:

The first is that ethereal form which one would assume when, leaving his physical, he would appear in his astral body—having in addition all the knowledge of an Adept. The Bodhisattva develops it in himself as he proceeds on the Path. Having reached the goal and refused its fruition, he remains on Earth, as an Adept; and when he dies, instead of going into Nirvana, he remains in that glorious body he has woven for himself, invisible to uninitiated mankind, to watch over and protect it.

"Sambhogakaya is the same, but with the additional lustre of 'three perfections,' one of which is entire oblivion of all earthly concerns."

The 319 pages of Dr. Keith's scholarly and able book form a valuable addition to the material for the study of Eastern religion and philosophy.

C. J.

Modern French Philosophy, by J. Alexander Gunn, Ph.D., Fellow of the University of Liverpool; Dodd, Mead & Co., 1922.

This book satisfies a want long felt by students of French thought, for until its publication there existed no consecutive account of the philosophical developments of the last hundred years in France. Dr. Gunn was excellently equipped for his undertaking by study at the Sorbonne and by personal relations with Boutroux, Bergson and others whose work he has discussed.

He has made very clear the recent outstanding accomplishments of France in the domain of metaphysics. The French have not been partial to complex and artificial systems in the man-

ner of Kant and Hegel, nor have they fallen into the other extreme of merely analytical criticism which is the hallmark of the English School. Like the Greeks, whom they so greatly resemble in other respects, the French have especially sought in their thinking to be clear. In the past, those who loved the foggy idealism of Germany were accustomed to classify French philosophy as essentially materialistic because the greatest materialists of the last two centuries were Frenchmen. They were great, even as materialists, because their ideas were clear. At the present time it is impossible to bring the charge of materialism against the dominant thinkers of France. Once again, clarity of thought makes misunderstanding very difficult; and one may say that it was this very zeal for clarity which enabled the French mind to escape from the untenable position of Nineteenth Century materialistic dogmatism, and to open the way to a new and most significant study of consciousness.

To Renouvier, Ravaisson, Lachelier, Fouillée, Boutroux, and Bergson, we may refer the beginnings of the "new psychology" of the subconscious. These men have sought Truth, not only as reflected in the intellect, but, above all, as actually manifested in the conscious exercise of the will. They have revealed a state of being, where subject and object are blended in a direct act of intuition, and where creation and knowledge appear as aspects of a single, undivided movement of the individualized spirit in response to the stimuli ever present in the field of Cosmic Nature. Dr. Gunn gives a remarkable quotation from Fouillée, which seems to synthesize the essential views of the so-called *Spiritualist* School: "There is in every idea a commencement of action, and even of movement, which tends to persist and to increase like an *élan*. . . . Every idea is already a force" (p. 124). Dr. Gunn indicated the vigour and promise of this new metaphysics of the will, so characteristic of the humanism of the French tradition. Metaphysics is free again, after many centuries, to move ahead in its proper course, as in the age of Plato and Pythagoras. As Maine de Biran wrote a hundred years ago: "Who knows what may be attained by concentrated meditation, and whether there may not be an interior 'new world', to be discovered some day by a metaphysical Columbus" (*op. cit.* p. 22).

S. V.

Immortality; edited by Rev. Sir James Marchant, K. B. E.; LL.D.; with an introduction by the Rt. Hon. Lord Ernle; G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1924.

This book is a collection of separate essays by eminent specialists, representing the common stock of past and contemporary ideas on the life of the soul after death. It is a timely book in an age which does not hesitate to question things which in the past were taken for granted. No cogent proof of immortality is offered, nor is it, of course, possible. But the "doubting Thomas," whose faith has been shaken, will find in this book that not only has a belief in immortality been fundamental in all the great religions, but also that it is the most adequate philosophical interpretation of the ethical and spiritual values of the life of mankind, and that the discoveries of science have in no way demonstrated its impossibility as a truth, even if they cannot endorse it.

Accordingly the Egyptian, Greek, Indian, Hebrew and Christian conceptions of immortality are given in order. These are followed by chapters on the philosophy of immortality, its ethical basis, the relations of science to the same subject, and the reflections of it in the works of the leading poets. The last chapter seems to the reviewer to have little if any point. On the other hand it appears remarkable, at first sight, that the Christian idea of immortality is the only one written almost in an apologetic vein, and the one which an intelligent sceptic would reject first, as involving too great a strain on his credulity. Whether this reflects to the disadvantage of Christian theology or to the writer of the chapter, the reviewer is not competent to decide, but it is obvious that any unfavourable comparisons which the reader might be tempted to make must depend for fairness on a demonstrated similarity of treatment. It is probable, for instance, that there is as great a gulf between modern Buddhist theology and the essence of Buddhism, as there is between Christ's teachings and modern Christian theology. If this be correct, it is apparent that modern Christian theology would scarcely compare favourably with the ideas of immortality derived from the ancient scriptures of India.

Readers of the QUARTERLY will, however, have still another angle of approach to this book.

The majority of them are not "doubting Thomases," and accept immortality as axiomatic, For these the earlier historical chapters will have little interest, as they contain nothing new, and Theosophists have long been familiar with the ideas of the great religions upon this subject. The later chapters are, however, definite and original contributions, and consequently the points of view of the authors, eminent in their respective fields, are matters of keen interest. Thus Rudolf Eucken adopts the view that immortality has an ethical basis, but also believes that ethics depends upon immortality. In other words ethics, as a basis of right moral action, cannot be endorsed on a scientific foundation of reason alone. The existence of an ethical instinct or sense in all peoples in all ages can scarcely be accounted for, unless the world is ultimately governed by spiritual values, and the ethical struggle of this life is carried on, or bears some fruit after death.

The two chapters on philosophy and science are easily the most interesting in the book. There is no space here to outline their respective arguments; indeed they deserve to be read, not outlined. To sum them up: philosophy would demonstrate that the nature of reality and of things is such as to render a concept of immortality reasonable and necessary. The discoveries of science, on the other hand, have had little bearing on the problem, but have produced no body of evidence which would make a belief in immortality illogical or untenable. Indeed if it be held that the teaching of modern biological evolution lead to an even wider teleology, then man has been created for a spiritual purpose and must serve a spiritual end. This is merely another way of leading up to the verdict of philosophy, already recited.

The chief flaw in these two chapters, from the standpoint of Theosophy, would be the vague definition of the soul, and the assumption that the personality is immortal. According to this view continuity of memory is essential, and the soul is little else than the personality plus a certain germ of spirituality derived from goodness knows where. One must have some sympathy for the desire for memory, once the personality is regarded as the true and immortal part of us. With this premise, reincarnation becomes meaningless and unsatisfactory, and does not reconcile the inequalities of human life with Divine justice. As one of the authors puts it, "it does not seem just that God should punish me for sins which He has erased from my memory." Following this reasoning, immortality itself would be equally meaningless without memory. To use Christian terms for a moment, who would care to strive for Heaven in the belief that Heaven was a far happier state than life on earth, if he did not remember, when he got there, that he had lived on earth, and consequently appreciate fully how much better off he was? But the assumption that the personality is immortal is gratuitous, and is entirely without adequate endorsement in either chapter. Once we make the assumption, however, that the personality is merely a means to the development of the immortal soul, the problem becomes radically altered, and the deductions made quite different. These any Theosophist should be able to make for himself. We shall merely suggest here that the adequate endorsement of our theosophical assumption will rest in the spiritual nature of the Universe, which is admittedly a philosophical necessity. The only part of a human being which can be eternal, is that part which is a reflection of or part of the Eternal, namely the spiritual part, or the soul. With this the personality has nothing to do, containing as it does much that is base and material, much that is born of desire, and much that is the reflection of a temporary environment. Let us rejoice that the soul is something far better and more worth while than any of these.

The Witness, written down by Jessie Platts; published by Hutchinson and Co., London, at 5 shillings.

This book is described on its cover as "a series of messages from a young officer of the Royal Marines, Lieut. E. F. L. Platts, who was killed in action in April, 1917, aged seventeen-and-a-half years. These messages have been received automatically through the hand of his mother, and in clear straightforward language the boy describes after-death conditions and life in the spirit world"—*as he, poor boy, found them, and as his mother's mental and psychic condition induced their description.*

Scores of such books have been written since the war. *Raymond*, by Sir Oliver Lodge, is

probably the best known of them. For students of Theosophy, much of their interest lies in the fact that they show how deeply the psychic world has been impressed with Madame Blavatsky's teaching—for all of them are more or less "theosophical" in doctrine—and in the further fact that they confirm our basic belief about the after-death states, namely, that men find what they take with them, find that which they are. Lieut. Platts must have been a clean, unselfish, splendidly brave boy. That he found Christ, but also found fishing, is just what we should expect (he did not kill the fish he caught, but threw them back into "the lake"!).

"Earth-bound," though in the most favourable sense; and his mother, whose intentions of course were of the best, did not and could not realize it. There are some people, calling themselves Theosophists, who encourage this kind of psychism, so fatal to the progress both of the medium and of the disincarnated entity; and it looks as if the mother, in the course of writing these "messages," had become acquainted with that group in England, and had accepted *their* "messages," in confirmation of her own, particularly in regard to "the Master Hilarion," whose supposed utterances remind us of Hartman's *Talking Image.*

Yet we are not among those who call such a book either a fraud or a delusion. On the contrary, the book is genuine, and for that reason is tragic. It is tragic because so many will accept it as the truth, when it is no nearer the truth than a blind man's idea of Japan if based upon a city-bred child's description of a Japanese garden. It is tragic because it results in such "ideals" as this: "We [disincarnated entities of the more enlightened class] hope to see before very long all this psychic investigation controlled by the proper people, and that in those churches where the priests are spiritualists, certain mediums should be retained by them, and work as part of the staff,"—to which we beg to add that if priests ever do it, they will deserve it! It is tragic because, to those who believe in the spirit and soul of man, the whole procedure is materialistic and stultifying. If we were to invite such communications from those whom we have loved and lost, we should feel that we were lowering them, lowering ourselves, and were violating the standards of the Masters whom we strive to serve.

X. O.

The Quarterly Book Department is about to publish *Fragments*, Vol. III, by Cavé; *Letters to Friends*, by John Gerard; *The Crest Jewel of Wisdom*, translated by Charles Johnston; *Plotinus*, by Stanley V. LaDow.

A new one volume edition of *The Secret Doctrine* may be ordered from the Quarterly Book Department. This volume of 1567 pages, 1 3/4 inches thick, duplicates the two volumes of the 1888 edition, as issued by Madame Blavatsky. Price $7.50.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION NO. 302.—*What circumstances and principles were involved in the crises of The Theosophical Society in 1884–85, in 1894–95, and in 1898? What is involved in the turn of the cycle, in 1925?*

ANSWER.—The principles are always the same, though the circumstances differ with the progression of the cycles.

If we believe, as many students of Theosophy do, that, in 1875, The Theosophical Society was founded by Masters of the White Lodge, as a part of the enduring Theosophical Movement, then it is clear that, to fulfil its mission, The Theosophical Society must in a measure understand the principles and purpose of the Lodge, and must be unswervingly loyal to these principles, with a loyalty stronger than death, a loyalty in which self is obliterated.

We may best understand what is at stake by recalling the words of a Master, written during the crisis of 1884–85:

"The present crisis that is shaking The Theosophical Society to its foundations is a question of perdition or salvation to thousands; a question of the progress of the Human Race or its retrogression, of its glory or dishonour, and for the majority of this race—*of being or not being—of annihilation.*"

What was required at that time was an understanding of the fundamental truth that The Theosophical Society had been founded, and was protected, by the Masters of the Lodge; this involved a recognition of the work and character of the chief agent and messenger of the Lodge, H. P. Blavatsky. It is futile to talk of loyalty to the Lodge without loyalty to the Lodge's agents.

Those who had a loyal understanding of H. P. Blavatsky's position, as a representative of the Lodge, carried The Theosophical Society through that crisis. They recognized the superb devotion and sacrifice, the magnificent courage, the Occult knowledge and power of the messenger; through this recognition, they recognized the Lodge. Those who failed, or thereafter were half-hearted adherents of The Theosophical Society, were, without exception, shipwrecked on the rock of suspicion, a suspicion engendered and fostered by personal vanity.

Ten years later, in 1894–95, came another crisis. The principle was the same: a loyal understanding of the purpose of the Lodge of Masters. The circumstances were different only in so far as W. Q. Judge, who, after H. P. Blavatsky's death in 1891, was the chief agent and messenger of the Lodge, had become the central object of attack; and in the further fact that this time the attack came from within, not from without. Once again, suspicion inflamed by vanity was the fatal rock in the channel, a vanity reinforced by personal ambition.

Those who, recognizing W. Q. Judge as the chief agent of the Lodge, were unswervingly loyal to him as the representative of the Masters, carried The Theosophical Society through the crisis. It should be added that the continued life of The Theosophical Society was, and is, due to the loyalty and understanding of disciples of W. Q. Judge.

In 1897–98, the principle was, as always, the same: a loyal understanding of the purpose of the Lodge of Masters. The circumstances called for adherence to that purpose, as against personal vanity and ambition. Those who were loyal to the principle carried The Theosophical Society forward.

To-day, in 1925, the principle is the same. The completion of the first fifty years of The Theosophical Society means that, in addition to a general understanding of the purpose of the Lodge of Masters, and a general adherence to that purpose, something further is required, corresponding to the growth and maturity of The Theosophical Society. It is required that those who are to form the heart, the living nucleus of The Theosophical Society, shall have an individual understanding of the purpose of the Lodge of Masters, an individual loyalty to that purpose. This will mean active co-operation with Masters, intelligent, devoted, self-forgetting: the effective loyalty of disciples, chêlas. It need hardly be added that, since the Lodge is eternally one, this individual loyalty will include the closest union and co-operation, genuine oneness of heart, self-forgetting, full of fiery devotion, among the members. Those who draw nearer to the Lodge, of necessity draw nearer to each other; their loyalty to the Lodge is the cement that binds them together.

Now, as always, it is a question of the progress of the Human Race or its retrogression, of its glory or dishonour, of perdition or salvation.

C. J.

QUESTION NO. 303.—*We flatter ourselves that it is the animal part of us that is full of sloth, and dislikes to make effort. Do we find in animals an unwillingness to become fit that would give us countenance?*

ANSWER.—It seems we do flatter ourselves and are rude to the animal. The animals have a more natural reaction to the stimulus of their surroundings, and if they are inert and become unfit, they cannot survive. Animals are moved from within by the animal Monad (cf. *Five Years of Theosophy*), while man has been endowed with the right of "choice" which he has debased by self-indulgence in various forms. The Tanha, or thirst for life, has been dulled by self-indulgence until experience of sensation, both positive and negative, becomes the habit-complex, and man drifts into slothful inertia. The animals have the instinct to follow natural law, while man has mostly made choice of the wrong road and is really put "out of countenance." A. K.

ANSWER.—It would seem that there is nothing essentially wrong with the animal nature in itself. The point is that we have deliberately and with full responsibility exploited the faculties and senses of our animal natures, until we have converted them into monstrosities, belonging neither to the animal nor to the human kingdom. A wild animal sleeps a great deal, but it is not lazy. It is blessed with too many enemies ever to dare to be off its guard for an instant. But a human soul, incarnating in an animal body, uncovers a multiplicity of psychic possibilities in the bodily functions. Thus, even sleep may become a vice, if it be cultivated as a means of self-indulgence. One result of the abuse of sleep is sloth, the dislike of effort. It is clear, however, that the animal is not to blame, but the fallen soul. L.

ANSWER.—We cannot account for our sloth and inertia on the ground that it is the animal part of us which is getting in our way. Rather is it our lower psychic nature, full of illusion and warped vision, and plausible reasons and excuses, which prolongs our inertia, obstructs our constructive action, or even leads us into the commission of acts which in their effect accentuate what the questioner thinks of as the sloth in us, and make it more difficult than ever for us to break clear. A.

QUESTION NO. 304.—*Where do the qualities of soul come from—such as endurance, courage, faith, love?*

ANSWER.—From the Soul, of which these and many other lovely and heroic virtues are the inherent qualities. They come to us by the channel of the Masters, who supremely possess them. They are of the essence of the Logos, expressions, therefore, of the One, concerning which even Masters do not speculate. The important thing is, not so much to guess their origin, as to possess them, and we can already find at least the beginning of each of them in ourselves.

J.

ANSWER.—Surely the qualities named are the soul in action—they are the soul itself—they are also both its qualities and possessions. And compare with this, Rule 16 of *Light on the Path*, where we are told that such "possessions must belong to the pure soul only, and be possessed therefore by all pure souls equally." Is not the soul a spiritual force working outward; and does not this force or vibration, contacting with "matter" in its more subtile forms, weave the garments or sheaths of the soul, in what we recognize as endurance, courage, faith, love? K.

ANSWER.—The qualities of the Soul, like the qualities of the body, may be regarded as reflections of still higher qualities resident in the Logos, which is itself a reflection or modification of the Eternal. In occult Nature there is neither separation nor division of parts, since there is an identity of essence joining together all things from the highest to the lowest. The only distinction is to be found in the varying capacities, which the monads or parts of the Oversoul possess, for containing the consciousness of the One Self. We may say that the qualities of the Soul manifest the Real more perfectly than do the corresponding qualities of physical things, but that they are in turn only stages in the eternal progress of the Divine in Self-Consciousness. S. L.

QUESTION NO. 305.—*We are told to search through the familiar presentations of truth in the past until the facts are discovered behind the symbols. This would seem to call for an equipment of either intellect or intuition, or of both, which all do not possess. What, if anything, can take the place of such equipment?*

ANSWER.—We must do more than discover the facts. We must go back of the facts to the purpose and meaning behind them; we must try to become at one with that purpose and meaning. How to do this? We must approach the facts, not in a search for knowledge or with a desire for growth in personal stature, but in a spirit of devotion, with a real desire to serve. We must try to understand with the heart, meditating upon the familiar presentations of truth until we begin to glimpse something at least of what lies beyond and behind them.

Then, if we will try to apply to the concrete problems of every day such measure of truth, of the real inner meaning that lies back of outer form, as we have been able to apprehend, we shall find that our understanding and perception deepen and grow in ways which may have nothing to do with intellect or intuition. Right and selfless motive in action, devotion, effort, aspiration, bring inspiration and vision. C. R. A.

ANSWER.—Surely the answer is, "Nothing can take the place of such equipment." But because that equipment is not a present possession, is no reason why it should not be developed. If anyone seeks to have a faculty not yet possessed, surely the best thing is to take the opportunity of setting to work to acquire it, and be thankful that one perceives the need to set to work. If one *really* desires such knowledge of the facts behind the symbols, one will try to acquire the power and strength to pierce behind the outer symbols of presentation. Remember *Light on the Path*, Rules 15 to 20, and the instruction given. A. K.

ANSWER.—Observation and experience. Did the meaning behind some beautiful legend ever flash upon you—such as the story of Ceres and Proserpina? It is astonishing how much may be found when once one begins to look. S. M.

ANSWER.—Perseverance in study and meditation, coupled with a sincere desire to know the truth for truth's sake, and not mere curiosity; in time light will break and the needful intuition will be developed, perhaps in this life, or, if not now, in another, as a direct result of our effort. S.

T·S·ACTIVITIES

NOTICE OF CONVENTION

The Theosophical Society

To the Branches of The Theosophical Society:

1. The Annual Convention of The Theosophical Society will be held at 64 Washington Mews, New York, on Saturday, April 25th, 1925, beginning at 10:30 A.M.

2. Branches unable to send delegates to the Convention are *earnestly requested* to send proxies. These may be made out to the Secretary T. S., or to any officer or member of the Society who is resident in New York, or is to attend the Convention. These proxies should state the number of members in good standing in the Branch.

3. Branch Secretaries are asked to send their annual reports to the Secretary T. S. These reports should cover the significant features of the year's work and should be accompanied by a complete list of officers and members, with the full name and address of each; also a statement of the number of members gained or lost during the year; also a record of the place and time of Branch meeting. These reports should reach the Secretary T. S. by April 1st.

4. Members-at-large are invited to attend the Convention sessions; and all Branch members, whether delegates or not, will be welcome.

5. Following the custom of former years, the sessions of the Convention will begin at 10:30 A.M. and 2:30 P.M. At 8:30 P.M. there will be a regular meeting of the New York Branch of the T. S., to which delegates and visitors are cordially invited. On Sunday, April 26th, at 3:30 P.M., there will be a public address, open to all who are interested in Theosophy. Tickets are not required for admission. Invitation cards will be supplied to all members, on request, so that they may have opportunity to call the lecture to the attention of their friends who reside in New York or in the vicinity.

Isabel E. Perkins,
Secretary, The Theosophical Society.
P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York.

February 16th, 1925.

Meetings

The regular meetings of the New York Branch of The Theosophical Society are held on alternate Saturday evenings, at 64 Washington Mews, between Washington Square and East 8th Street. The meetings begin at half past eight, and close at ten o'clock. Meetings will be held on April 11th and 25th (Convention Meeting).

Visitors are welcome at these meetings.

Theosophical Quarterly

All changes of address, whether a summer address or a permanent change, should be sent to the Subscription Department, P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York, at least two weeks before date of publication.

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The Theosophical Society

Founded by H. P. Blavatsky at New York in 1875

THE Society does not pretend to be able to establish at once a universal brotherhood among men, but only strives to create the nucleus of such a body. Many of its members believe that an acquaintance with the world's religions and philosophies will reveal, as the common and fundamental principle underlying these, that "spiritual identity of all Souls with the Oversoul" which is the basis of true brotherhood; and many of them also believe that an appreciation of the finer forces of nature and man will still further emphasize the same idea.

The organization is wholly unsectarian, with no creed, dogma, nor personal authority to enforce or impose; neither is it to be held responsible for the opinions of its members, who are expected to accord to the beliefs of others that tolerance which they desire for their own.

The following proclamation was adopted at the Convention of the Society, held at Boston, April, 1895:

"The Theosophical Society in America by its delegates and members in Convention assembled, does hereby proclaim fraternal good will and kindly feeling toward all students of Theosophy and members of Theosophical Societies wherever and however situated. It further proclaims and avers its hearty sympathy and association with such persons and organizations in all theosophical matters except those of government and administration, and invites their correspondence and co-operation.

"To all men and women of whatever caste, creed, race, or religious belief, who aim at the fostering of peace, gentleness, and unselfish regard one for another, and the acquisition of such knowledge of men and nature as shall tend to the elevation and advancement of the human race, it sends most friendly greeting and freely proffers its services.

"It joins hands with all religions and religious bodies whose efforts are directed to the purification of men's thoughts and the bettering of their ways, and it avows its harmony therewith. To all scientific societies and individual searchers after wisdom upon whatever plane, and by whatever righteous means pursued, it is and will be grateful for such discovery and unfoldment of Truth as shall serve to announce and confirm a *scientific basis for ethics*.

"And lastly, it invites to its membership those who, seeking a higher life hereafter, would learn to know the *path* to tread in this."

Applications for membership should be addressed to the Secretary T. S., P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York.